Tragic Props and Cognitive Function

ASPECTS OF THE FUNCTION OF IMAGES IN THINKING

COLLEEN CHASTON

MNEMOSYNE SUPPLEMENTS MONOGRAPHS ON GREEK AND ROMAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

BRILL

Tragic Props and Cognitive Function

Mnemosyne

Supplements

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VOLUME 317

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By

Colleen Chaston

BRILL

LEIDEN • BOSTON
2010

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Chaston, Colleen.
Tragic props and cognitive function : aspects of the function of images in thinking / by Colleen Chaston.
p. cm. — (Mnemosyne. Supplements: monographs on Greek and Roman language and literature, ISSN 0169-8958 ; v. 317)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-90-04-17738-3 (hardback : alk. paper) 1. Greek drama (Tragedy)—History and criticism. 2. Imagery (Psychology) in literature. 3. Theaters—Stage-setting and scenery—Greece—History. 4. Theater—Greece—History—To 500. I. Title. II. Series.

PA3203.C47 2010
880'.010922—dc22

2009035703

ISSN 0169-8958
ISBN 978 9004 17738 3

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PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

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ABBREVIATIONS

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A note on the English spelling of Greek authors and titles. I have provided a transliterated version throughout (k=κ, kh=χ, y=υ) although where there is an alternative in brackets that is the version I use in discussion.

Aiskhin.	Aiskhines
Ktes.	*Pros Ktesiphon (Against Ktesiphon)*
A.	Aiskhylos
Ag.	*Agamemnon*
Eu.	*Eumenides*
Fr.	*Fragments*
Hik.	*Hiketides*
Kh.	*Khoephoroi*
Pers.	*Persai*
Se.	*Hepta Epi Thebas (Seven Against Thebes)*
And.	Andokides
Eir.	*Peri Tes Pros Lakedaimonious Eirenes (On the Peace with Sparta)*
Apollod.	Apollodoros
Bibl.	*Bibliotheke*
Ar.	Aristophanes
Akh.	*Akharnes*
Bat.	*Batrakhoi (Frogs)*
Fr.	*Fragments*
Hipp.	*Hippes*
Lys.	*Lysistrate*
Ne.	*Nephelai (Clouds)*
Pl.	*Ploutos*
Th.	*Thesmophoriazousai*
Arist.	Aristoteles (Aristotle)
Metaph.	*Ta Meta Ta Physika (Metaphysics)*
Po.	*Peri Poietikes (Poetics)*

Pol.	*Politika (Politics)*
Rh.	*Rhetorike (Rhetoric)*
August.	Augustine
Conf.	*Confessionum Libri (Confessions)*
Cic.	Cicero
De or.	*De oratore*
D.	Demosthenes
Erot.	*Erotikos*
Lept.	*Pros Leptinen (Against Leptines)*
Parapres.	*Peri Tes Parapresbeias (On the False Embassy)*
D.S.	Diodoros Sikeliotes (Diodoros)
Bibl.	*Bibliotheke*
E.	Euripides
Alk.	*Alkestis*
Andr.	*Andromakhe*
Ba.	*Bakkhai*
El.	*Elektra*
Fr.	*Fragments*
Hek.	*Hekabe*
Hel.	*Helene (Helen)*
Her.	*Herakles*
Herakl.	*Herakleidai*
Hik.	*Hiketides*
Hipp.	*Hippolytos*
IA	*Iphigeneia he en Aulidi (Iphigeneia in Aulis)*
IT	*Iphigeneia he en Taurois (Iphigeneia among the Taurians)*
Io.	*Ion*
Med.	*Medeia (Medea)*
Or.	*Orestes*
Ph.	*Phoinissai*
Tro.	*Troiades*
Gell.	Gellius, Aulus
NA	*Noctes Atticae (Attic Nights)*
Hdt.	Herodotos
Hes.	Hesiodos (Hesiod)
Asp.	*Aspis (Shield)*
Theog.	*Theogonia (Theogony)*
W&D	*Erga kai Hemerai (Works and Days)*

H.	Homeros (Homer)
Il.	*Ilias (Iliad)*
Od.	*Odysseia (Odyssey)*
H. Hymn. Di.	*Homerou Hymnoi: Eis Dionyson (Homeric Hymn to Dionysos)*
Paus.	Pausanias
Pi.	Pindaros (Pindar)
N.	*Nemea*
O.	*Olympia*
P.	*Pythia*
Pl.	Platon (Plato)
Euthphr.	*Euthyphron (Euthphro)*
Men.	*Menon (Meno)*
Phdr.	*Phaidros*
R.	*Politeia (Republic)*
Smp.	*Symposion*
Sph.	*Sophistes (Sophist)*
Plou.	Ploutarkhos
Mor.	*Moralia*
Alk.	*Alkibiades*
Arist.	*Aristeides*
Kim.	*Kimon*
Krass.	*Krassos*
Lys.	*Lysandros*
Nik.	*Nikias*
Sol.	*Solon*
S.	Sophokles
Ai.	*Aias*
Ant.	*Antigone*
El.	*Elektra*
OK	*Oidipous epi Kolonoi (Oidipous at Kolonos)*
OT	*Oidipous Tyrannos*
Ph.	*Philoktetes*
Tr.	*Trakhiniai*
Stesikh.	Stesikhoros
Pal.	*Helene: Palinoidia*
Th.	Thoukydides
X.	Xenophon
Hell.	*Hellenika*
Oik.	*Oikonomikos*

Secondary Sources

AJA	*American Journal of Archaeology*
AJP	*American Journal of Philology*
BICS	*Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*
C&M	*Classica et Mediaevalia*
Cl. Ant.	*Classical Antiquity*
CP	*Classical Philology*
CQ	*Classical Quarterly*
CR	*Classical Review*
CW	*Classical World*
G&R	*Greece and Rome*
GRBS	*Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*
Hesp.	*Hesperia: Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens*
HSCP	*Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*
ICS	*Illinois Classical Studies*
JDAI	*Jahrbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts*
JHS	*Journal of Hellenic Studies*
LIMC	*Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*
MDAI(A)	*Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts: Athenische Abteilung*
OCD	*The Oxford Classical Dictionary*
NewSOED	*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*
Philol.	*Philologus*
PCPS	*Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*
Rev. Arch.	*Revue archéologique*
Rh. Mus.	*Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*
SO	*Symbolae Osloenses*
TAPA	*Transactions of the American Philological Association*
Wien. Stud.	*Wiener Studien*

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My first thanks go to Professor John Davidson, Professor Kevin Lee † and Dr Elizabeth Minchin who were the supervisors of my Victoria University of Wellington Ph.D. thesis on which this book is based. Their guidance was always generous, wise, and encouraging. I am most grateful also to the examiners of the thesis, Professor Edith Hall, Professor Eric Csapo and Professor Chris Dearden for their insightful comments and suggestions. To the anonymous reviewer at Brill, my gratitude as well for your helpful advice.

Others whom I wish to thank, who have played an invaluable part in the making of the thesis and its transformation into a book, include Professor Tore Helstrup who kindly read the cognitive section of the Introduction, Erika Langman and Dr Marian Hill for their advice on German and French texts, Tanya Myshkin who drew and painted the plates, Susan Ford for proofreading, photocopying and library searches. And to my couriers, Daniel, Claire, Alice and Ashley, thank you.

The Australian National University has continued to provide me with the privileges of a Visiting Fellow. For this I am most grateful. My warm thanks go to everyone in this institution who has made my association with it so pleasant: academic staff, visiting fellows, postgraduate and undergraduate students in the Classics department; Homer and Drama Reading Groups; and friends on campus.

I wish to thank the following publishers and authors for permission to reproduce material held under copyright.

Figure 1: Brandon House, inc., *Journal of Mental Imagery*, 9.2, G. Kaufmann, "A Theory of Symbolic Representation in Problem Solving" (1985) 51–70, at 63, Fig. 1.

Figure 2: Nijhoff (Springer Science and Business Media), *Cognitive and Neuropsychological Approaches to Mental Imagery*, M. Denis, J. Engelkamp and J. T. E. Richardson, eds; G. Kaufmann, "Mental Imagery and Problem Solving" (1988) 231–240, at 233, Table 1.

Figure 3: Wiley-Blackwell, *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 29, T. Helstrup, "The Influence of Verbal and Imagery Strategies on Processing Figurative Language" (1988) 65–84, at 81, Table 7.

Figure 4: North-Holland (Elsevier), *Imagery, Creativity and Discovery: A Cognitive Perspective*, B. Roskos-Ewoldson, M. J. Intons-Peterson and R. E. Anderson, eds; G. Kaufmann and T. Helstrup, "Mental Imagery: Fixed or Multiple Meanings? Nature and Function of Imagery in Creative Thinking" (1993) 123–50, at 139, Fig. 2.

Figure 6: CUP, *Tragedy in Athens*, D. Wiles (1997) 57, Fig. 9.

Finally, to Scot and our beloved family, who have suffered tragic props for a long time with good humour and without complaint, I dedicate this book.

C.C. 2009

INTRODUCTION

Whereas there is much uncertainty about what the fifth-century BC spectator 'saw' in terms of stage effects and scenery in performances of Greek tragedy, there is little doubt about the central function and visibility of certain props. Such significant objects as Agamemnon's tapestry (A. *Ag.*) Philoktetes' bow (S. *Ph.*) or Ion's cradle (E. *Io.*) perform an important thematic and symbolic role within their respective dramas. While acknowledging this dramatic function, the present study proposes that props represent images, both visually perceived and mental, which may serve a cognitive function in thinking and problem solving.

Although thinking and problem solving are areas of mental activity more readily associated with verbal reasoning, the suitability of imagery as a vehicle for thought is supported by anecdotal evidence from the sciences and the arts, and, more recently, empirical evidence from the work of cognitive psychologists. Their work suggests that imagery may have a valuable function in the retrieval of information from the mind, and may be particularly useful in problem-solving situations which involve novelty and cognitive conflict. These are the problems which Vernant identifies as providing "la perspective propre à la tragédie".[1]

Of the array of visually perceived and mental images in the performance of tragedy, visual and mental props represent possibly the most clearly defined and concrete of tragedy's images. As an economical, sustained and spatially defined source of the visual the prop may provide a 'control' for examining the connection between visual imagery and the spectator's intellectual experience of tragic drama.

Shape and contour, cognitive psychologists tell us, are most important in the vividness and identification of our images. The urn in Sophokles' *Elektra* is one prop whose shape takes on various meanings including that of the funerary urn of the spectators' prior experience or the 'beloved head' over which Elektra laments. By means of such transformations, I shall argue, the tragedian may activate the cognitive potential of imagery in thinking and problem solving.

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[1] Vernant (1986) 22. Cf. Vernant (1988a) 242.

This argument for the importance of the cognitive function of imagery and its relevance to Greek tragedy may supplement other readings which reach similar conclusions about the plays by other means. By presenting 'image' as an adjunct to 'word' this work suggests that, for some spectators at least, image may constitute a particularly memorable cue to meaning in the play. Further, I propose that the prop images discussed facilitate conceptual change and the making of new meanings. As symbols the props function as conventional metaphors; their reconstrual lends itself to the making of novel metaphors.

Chapters one to three examine respectively key prop images in three plays representing the three major canonical tragedians: the shield in Aiskhylos' *Seven Against Thebes*, the urn in Sophokles' *Elektra* and the smiling mask of Dionysos in Euripides' *Bakkhai*. Each of these prop images represents a precious object, already familiar to the spectators, and already, in conventional metaphor, symbolic of power. The tragedians, I suggest, may transform and reconstrue these familiar and precious images and in so doing transform and reconstrue their metaphoric content. Transformation was not unknown in the ancient world. Gernet provides an example in the evolution or "*transfert*" which belongs to the sceptre and by which it acquires both its shape and its significance.[2] The sceptre of precious metal originates from the wooden staff of the prophet, an object imbued with the authority of the divine, and which, as the royal sceptre, accrues "something of the power of Zeus".[3] The more radical reconstrual that I am proposing in this discussion, attached to objects of power, may facilitate a reconceptualisation of power itself. To this end, I discuss each prop image from three perspectives: the remembered experience of the spectators, the poet's manipulation of the image in the present action of the play and thirdly, a conjecture as to possible effects which particular image transformations may have on spectators' understanding of real contemporary issues. A prop representing a precious object may act as a cue to memory and may share in the spectators' past associations with the object. The prop may assume the conventional metaphoric symbolism of the object. In the course of the play these associations between prop and object may become increasingly defamiliarised as their visual and

---

[2] Gernet (1981) 138.

[3] Gernet (1981) 138. The bakkhic *thyrsos* can also be seen as a transformation of the sceptre.

conceptual correspondence is strained by tragic action. This process of transformation may result in new visual metaphors which endow both prop and precious object with new meaning for the spectators. Such new understandings, representing the result of metaphor change, may then find applications in the real world. Topical issues such as Athenian imperialism and revenge provide useful (although possibly only two of many) applications for what in cognitive terms may be called the hypothesis stage of image function. This third perspective is intended to suggest the end result in general of the method—a changing of the "metaphors we live by"—[4] rather than to engage in sustained historical discussion of specific issues. Imperialism and revenge are universal issues so that hypotheses raised by the plays about the exercise of power may also resonate with modern contexts. Twenty-two plates, representative of the props and their transformations act as cues to meaning in the book in the way that the props themselves may act in the performance of the plays.[5]

Before I examine the props and their plays I review the place of *opsis* or the visual in Greek tragedy, and then proceed to relevant theories on the function of imagery in reasoning proposed by cognitive psychologists. My starting place is Aristotle and his writings in *Poetics* on the importance of *opsis* in tragic drama. Despite views that appear to stem from his reading of tragedy rather than its performance, when Aristotle does address performance *opsis* is a necessary part, and in both his *Poetics* and *Rhetoric* he draws a relation between *opsis* and *mimesis* that suggests for *opsis* a role in the intellectual pleasure of tragedy. Discussion of *mimesis* leads to the apprehension of universals and Aristotles' related views on metaphor. Finally in this section I refer to Aristophanes' *Frogs* and the intellectual clarification theory behind Aristotles' *katharsis* as indicators of the cognitive appeal of tragedy.

The second section of the Introduction gives an overview of the range of visually perceived and mental images encountered in tragedy. These images are shown to be drawn from the spectators' prior experience of oral tradition, art, religion, theatre, sporting contests and music. The images of tragedy are not static, isolated entities, but make connections across time, space and thought, and in their contribution

---

4 Title of a book by Lakoff and Johnson (1980).

5 The relevant plates are inserted at the end of each chapter.

to variation and generalisation appear to have a function in concept change and problem solving.

In the third section I introduce aspects of imagery from the work of cognitive psychologists which may enhance our understanding of the cognitive function of imagery in tragedy, in particular its usefulness in situations of novelty and cognitive conflict. In place of the panorama of images of section two I use the more controlled example of one significant prop, the urn in Sophokles' *Elektra*. Research into the differing functions of image and word in thinking underpins discussion in this section. The work of Allan Paivio points to connections between the two symbolic systems represented by word and image especially in memory functions. Geir Kaufmann uses the types of processing outlined by Paivio—the *sequential* processing of the verbal system and the *simultaneous/synchronous* processing of the imagery system—to propose the relative significance of these systems in the solving of different kinds of problems. His research suggests that where problems are novel and involve cognitive conflict, that is, where there is no set procedure for their solution, the imagery system can be particularly effective at least in the initial stages of problem solving. With his colleague Tore Helstrup, Kaufmann conducted experiments on the capacity of the mind to construe shape in different ways and the relation of this reconstrual of mental imagery to creative thought. Kaufmann identifies 'comparison' and 'anticipation' as the main cognitive tasks of imagery. Perceptual comparisons invite sure judgements whereas perceptual anticipations involve the making of hypotheses, the drawing out of a general principle from comparisons, or the reconceptualising of an idea or an issue. In the case of a dominant visual prop in a play which is the enactment of a novel problem involving cognitive conflict, transformations of that prop, in line with Kaufmann's theory, may be expected to facilitate problem solving. At the same time, transformation of same-shape images and ideas of comparison and anticipation invite us to revisit metaphor and its function in thinking. Proponents of a contemporary theory of metaphor such as George Lakoff and Mark Johnson advance the view that metaphor is not merely the preserve of the poet but that metaphor shapes our everyday communication and thought.

In our modern world we are all too aware of the manipulative power of imagery in advertising and in political and ideological propaganda. The ancients were similarly aware of this power as we see in Augustus'

building program of 23–12 BC,[6] or 'makeovers' of the Alexander image in statuary, mosaic, fresco and coins—the leonine hair (Alexander the lion king), the Akhillean posture and spear (Alexander the hero), Alexander holding the thunderbolt (Alexander the god).[7] These visually perceived, concrete, tactile images act as conceptual metaphors and in some cases, such as the Alexander examples, as image metaphors or mappings between same-shape images. An image may also act as a cue, or to use Allan Paivio's term, "a conceptual peg" for the recall of associated material (in these cases, manifestations of power).[8] Images used in this way for political and ideological purposes are effective because of their appeal to memory and to a belief system. They do not, however, invite the spectator/viewer to think innovatively.

Closer to this study of certain tragic props and their function in "reasoning through imagery",[9] we find a contemporary example of the transformation of a dominant image in Alfred Hitchcock's thriller *The Birds*.[10] Early in the film there is a scene in a pet shop in which a man (played by Rod Taylor) captures a canary that has escaped and returns it to its cage. Later in the film this remembered mental image could be said to be transformed by an image metaphor, that is, the superimposition of congruent shapes, when the scene focuses on a woman (played by Tippi Hedren) caged in a telephone booth by attacking seagulls. The spectator is invited to make a perceptual comparison between the two images and an anticipation along the general lines of the concept of 'entrapment'. Imagery is here very effective and efficient in the initial phase of problem solving. The inferences that the spectator may make in the real world, on the other hand, will most likely be processed through the verbal, sequential system.

I turn now to a fuller discussion of the concepts introduced above and their part in developing a methodology for approaching the cognitive function of certain tragic props. The three sections outlined are discussed under the following headings:

---

[6] Cf. Zanker (1988).

[7] See Stewart (1993).

[8] Allan Paivio in particular among the cognitive psychologists has researched concreteness effects on recall and memory, the idea that pictures and high imagery words are easiest for the mind to remember and that such pictures and words act as cues or "conceptual pegs" for the recall of associated material.

[9] Rumelhart and Norman (1988) 555.

[10] See Gibbs (1994) 184–5.

I Aristotle's *opsis*
II The sorts of images we find in tragedy
III Cognitive psychology and the role of imagery in problem solving.

I *Aristotle's* opsis

The importance of the visual in tragic performance

To privilege the visual in a study of Greek tragedy is to question to some extent Aristotle's relegation of *opsis* in his *Poetics* to the ἀτεχνότατον δὲ καὶ ἥκιστα οἰκεῖον τῆς ποιητικῆς,[11] "least artistic and least essential part of the art of poetry".[12] Aristotle's opinion is consistent with his separation of tragic action from performance: ἡ γὰρ τῆς τραγῳδίας δύναμις καὶ ἄνευ ἀγῶνος καὶ ὑποκριτῶν ἔστιν,[13] "For the power of tragedy is felt even without a dramatic performance and actors", and his claim that plot by itself is both superior and sufficient in the evocation of the tragic emotions of pity and fear.[14] And yet, elsewhere in *Poetics* and in *Rhetoric*, Aristotle's thoughts on *mimesis* raise the importance of the visual to a role in thinking itself.

> διὰ γὰρ τοῦτο χαίρουσι τὰς εἰκόνας ὁρῶντες, ὅτι συμβαίνει θεωροῦντας μανθάνειν καὶ συλλογίζεσθαι τί ἕκαστον, οἷον ὅτι οὗτος ἐκεῖνος· ἐπεὶ ἐὰν μὴ τύχῃ προεωρακώς, οὐχ ᾗ μίμημα ποιήσει τὴν ἡδονὴν…[15]
>
> Thus men find pleasure in viewing representations because it turns out that they learn and infer what each thing is—for example, that this particular object is that kind of object; since if one has not happened to see the object previously, he will not find any pleasure in the imitation *qua* imitation…

[11] *Po.* 1450b17. On Aristotle's attitude to *opsis* see discussions by Halliwell (1986) Appendix 3: 337–43; and Janko (1984) 228–9. For a refutation of Aristotle's verdict on *opsis*, using the evidence of extant tragedy, see Dingel (1971) 347–67. Cf. Scott (1999) 15–48, who argues for the necessary place of spectacle in Aristotle's analysis of tragedy in *Poetics*.

[12] Translations of *Poetics* are by Golden in Golden and Hardison (1968).

[13] *Po.* 1450b18–19.

[14] *Po.* 1453b1–11.

[15] *Po.* 1448b15–18. Aristotle expresses the same idea in similar language in *Rh.* 1371b. He describes the delight of imitation in art, sculpture and poetry as not arising from the pleasantness of the object ἀλλὰ συλλογισμὸς ἔστιν ὅτι τοῦτο ἐκεῖνο, ὥστε μανθάνειν τι συμβαίνει (1371b9–10), "but the inference that the imitation and the object imitated are identical, so that the result is that we learn something" (translations of *Rhetoric* are by Freese [1926]). Cf. Sifakis (1986) 211–22, (2001) 38–53. Against the view that Aristotle is here reflecting a serious cognitive experience by the spectator of a tragic play, see Ford (2002) 266–70.

In this passage from *Poetics* 4, Aristotle relates the imitation of objects by the artist to their reception by the spectator. He outlines a process which moves from the past, the spectators' prior visual familiarity (προεωρακώς) with the subject (ἐκεῖνος), to the present, the object that is being represented (οὗτος), to a future 'learning and inferring'. This relation would seem to depend initially on *opsis* or the external appearance of the *mimesis*. When Aristotle comes to the *mimesis* of tragic action in *Poetics* 6 he makes explicit this essential relation between *opsis* and *mimesis*: ἐπεὶ δὲ πράττοντες ποιοῦνται τὴν μίμησιν, πρῶτον μὲν ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἂν εἴη τι μόριον τραγῳδίας ὁ τῆς ὄψεως κόσμος,[16] "And since [in drama] agents accomplish the imitation by acting the story out, it follows, first of all, that the arrangement of the spectacle should be, of necessity, some part of the tragedy". That same necessary place of *opsis* in tragedy is repeated in the list of its parts.[17] To privilege the visual, then, does not appear at odds with Aristotle's views.

The case of Karkinos in *Poetics* 17 is further indication of Aristotle's appreciation of the importance of the visual in performance. Aristotle refers to the failure by Karkinos to visualise his dramatic action which led to the failure of his play.[18] The poet must keep the action πρὸ ὀμμάτων…ἐναργέστατα ὁρῶν ὥσπερ παρ' αὐτοῖς γιγνόμενος τοῖς πραττομένοις (*Po.* 1455a23–5), "before his eyes…visualizing the events as distinctly as he can, just as if he were present at their actual occurrence". Aristotle is here commenting on the 'actual events' in the mind's eye of the poet. What the spectators see is the realisation of those events in performance. The incongruities (τὰ ὑπεναντία, *Po.* 1455a26) which the spectators saw in the play of Karkinos may relate to an actual event which was then transposed into the performance, or to the performance which did not accurately convey an actual event, but in either case it was the *opsis* of the performance that upset them.[19] Whatever Karkinos' lapse was, the spectators' annoyed reaction to it (δυσχερανάντων…τῶν θεατῶν, *Po.* 1455a28–9) supports the idea that visual effect was important.[20]

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16 *Po.* 1449b31–3.

17 *Po.* 1450a7–10.

18 *Po.* 1455a22–9.

19 For discussion and bibliography on Karkinos' lapse, see Davidson (2003) 109–22.

20 See Halliwell (1986) 340 and n. 10.

Opsis, mimesis and the realising of universals

Having written of the cognitive appeal of works of art in the passage from *Poetics* 4 quoted above—as opposed to their more commonly appreciated emotional appeal—[21] Aristotle does not explicitly extend this function in learning and inferring to *opsis* in tragedy. Halliwell, however, argues for the inclusion of "non-visual art" in Aristotle's visual example of *mimesis*, under the general principle of the cognitive appeal of images.[22] Halliwell's justification for this extension of the implications of *mimesis* is Aristotle's return to the topic in *Poetics* 9.[23] There the cognitive potential of *mimesis* is realised in the universals to which dramatic poetry gives rise.[24] The poet achieves this through his plots and the human actions which he imitates.[25] As a necessary part of dramatic poetry *opsis* too may have a share in the cognitive potential of *mimesis* and the realising of universals. If this is the case then Aristotle's support for the importance of visual effect may imply a function for *opsis* in the intellectual experience of the spectator of tragic drama.

Metaphor: verbal and visual

One vehicle for inference and learning applicable to both visual and non-visual components of the dramatic experience is metaphor. Aristotle's discussion of dramatic poetry more as a verbal medium than as a visual medium tends to obscure parallels between verbal metaphor and visual metaphor.[26] Yet the language in which he describes verbal metaphor is reminiscent of that in which he describes *mimesis*,[27] and what amounts to visual metaphor in art.[28] At *Rhetoric* 1410b10–13 he writes: τὸ γὰρ μανθάνειν ῥᾳδίως ἡδὺ φύσει πᾶσιν ἐστὶ . . . ἡ δὲ μεταφορὰ

[21] See Tracy (1946) 43–6.
[22] Halliwell (1986) 73.
[23] Halliwell (1986) 74–81. Cf. Sifakis (2001) 44.
[24] *Po.* 1451b6–7. Cf. Sifakis (1986) 218–20, (2001) 49–52.
[25] *Po.* 1451b27–9. Halliwell (1986) 78–80.
[26] That visualisation was an important element in Aristotle's understanding of verbal metaphor is suggested in *Rh.* 1411b22–5 where metaphor puts things "before the eyes" (πρὸ ὀμμάτων) by giving them actuality (ἐνέργεια). Silk (2003) 129 comments that "there is nothing especially visual about metaphorical (or any other kind of) actualization". The "metaphorical . . . actualization" of the tragic props in the discussion below, on the other hand, is achieved largely through visualisation.
[27] *Po.* 1448b15–18, *Rh.* 1371b9–10.
[28] On metaphor and *mimesis* see Innes (2003) 14, and on metaphor and visual art see P. Crowther (2003) 91–2.

ποιεῖ τοῦτο μάλιστα, "Easy learning is naturally pleasant to all…It is metaphor, therefore, that above all produces this effect". Whereas metaphor brings an immediacy to analogy which urges the mind to grasp a new idea, simile οὐ λέγει ὡς τοῦτο ἐκεῖνο· οὐκοῦν οὐδε ζητεῖ τοῦτο ἡ ψυχή,[29] "does not say that this *is* that, so that the mind does not even examine this". At *Poetics* 1459a5–8 Aristotle writes that for the poet, πολὺ δὲ μέγιστον τὸ μεταφορικὸν εἶναι…τὸ γὰρ εὖ μεταφέρειν τὸ τὸ ὅμοιον θεωρεῖν ἐστιν, "by far the most important matter is to have skill in the use of metaphor…for the ability to construct good metaphors implies the ability to see essential similarities" and in this lies his genius (εὐφυΐα). The picture of metaphor that we have from these passages from *Rhetoric* and *Poetics* suggests that metaphor is the best route to learning, that it tells us that this thing is that thing, that it encourages the mind to enquire and search, and that there is something the same between the two elements of the comparison. Aristotle's description of verbal metaphor thus echoes his thoughts on *mimesis* or visual metaphor in art.

A further passage from *Rhetoric* helps us to understand the nature of the 'sameness' between the objects compared that Aristotle has in mind: δεῖ δὲ μεταφέρειν, καθάπερ εἴρηται πρότερον, ἀπὸ οἰκείων καὶ μὴ φανερῶν, οἷον καὶ ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ τὸ ὅμοιον καὶ ἐν πολὺ διέχουσι θεωρεῖν εὐστόχου,[30] "As we have said before, metaphors should be drawn from objects which are proper to the object, but not too obvious; just as, for instance, in philosophy it needs sagacity to grasp the similarity in things that are apart". Examples of metaphors that are regarded most highly, those that are κατ' ἀναλογίαν (*Rh.* 1411a1–2), "based on proportion", show how "very apart" indeed are the elements for comparison (*Rh.* 1411a2–1411b21). Unlike so many of the similes of Homer which draw the listeners into their past, into the animal or agrarian images of real life,[31] Aristotle's examples of proportional metaphor draw before the eyes (πρὸ ὀμμάτων, *Rh.* 1411a35) images that do not exist in real life: a year without spring (*Rh.* 1411a4), the two eyes of Greece (*Rh.* 1411a5–6), a throttling of the people (*Rh.* 1411a8).[32]

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[29] *Rh.* 1410b19–20.

[30] *Rh.* 1412a11–13.

[31] M. S. Silk *OCD* (1996) *s.v.* "Metaphor and simile" 967 classifies their first function in "ancient usage" as that of "mak[ing] clearer, as through a diagram, usually by appeal to familiar experience". Cf. Silk (2003) 126.

[32] Goheen (1951) 110 notes the convention that relates metaphor to tragedy and simile to epic. Rather than mere convention, however, he suggests that "the elevation

These examples lead us, in Hausman's words, to "identify a similarity not seen before".[33] Rather than metaphor merely making comparisons, Hausman argues that metaphor presents us with what is novel, "with what is not the case, with what appears…to deny what we expect of reality".[34] Thus, he says, metaphor "'rejects' the past", "constitute[s] new meaning" and "makes a contribution to the world".[35] Although these views go beyond what Aristotle proposes for metaphor they are not inconsistent with his directions and the importance he places on metaphor in intellectual discovery.

Closer to Aristotle's thoughts are those formulated by Cicero (*De Or.* 3.40.160) while offering his reasons for the pleasure of verbal metaphor.[36] He, too, comments on the way metaphor leads the hearer's thoughts to something else ("is qui audit alio ducitur cogitatione"), but he also identifies the relation of metaphor to inference: "Singulis verbis res ac totum simile conficitur", "Each individual word evokes the thing itself as well as a complete simile of it".[37] This apprehension of the universal in the particular brings us back to Aristotle's *mimesis* and its part in learning and inferring, be that in the simple case of a picture (*Po.* 4) or the complex case of tragic action (*Po.* 9). Just as verbal metaphor invites the hearer to make inferences, so the tragic poet's inclusion of the visual in his drama allows for learning through a *mimesis* which is activated in the mind of the spectator by *opsis* and visual metaphor: this is that, οὗτος ἐκεῖνος,[38] τοῦτο ἐκεῖνο.[39]

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of metaphor [by the dramatists], with its manner of implication and suggestive identification, over simile, with its usual explicit exactness, appears to seek and achieve effects of rapidity and intensity together with the possibility of extensive associations".

33 Hausman (1975) 101. Cf. Gibbs (1994) 211.

34 Hausman (1975) 117.

35 Hausman (1975) 118. Cf. Hausman (1989) 9–10. Also see Lakoff and Johnson (1980) 145, and Goatly (1997) section 5.2.3 on "Reconceptualization".

36 Cited in Tracy (1946) 46.

37 Translation by May and Wisse (2001).

38 *Po.* 1448b17. Like Halliwell (1986) 73, 78–80, Hardison in Golden and Hardison (1968) 92–3, too, finds the universal in the particular behind this expression. He relates it to *Poetics* 9 and to Aristotle's concept of learning in *Metaphysics* 1036a28, 1059b29. For a contrary view see Lucas in his commentary on Aristotle's *Poetics* (1968) at 1448b13. Lucas finds only a literal inference in συλλογίζεσθαι (1448b16), "the intellectual pleasure of solving a puzzle, as in the simple delight of the Chorus in the *parodos* of Eur. *Ion* when they recognize the subjects of the (?) reliefs at Delphi". Lucas goes on to deny to this passage in Aristotle any allusion to the discovery of universals in particulars, or to the type of thinking through metaphor which can lead to new understandings. Against Lucas' "simple delight" see also Sifakis (2001) 48.

39 *Rh.* 1371b9.

The tragic mask

Inference through metaphor, as Cicero has reminded us, involves a relationship of similarity between two components, one a particular, the other a universal. For *opsis* to function as visual metaphor which leads to thought one of the components needs to be a universal. The tragic mask is a prime example of visual metaphor in its representation of both a particular character and, more generally, suffering humanity. As Rehm writes: "Masks confront the audience with ambiguities of appearance and change, instantiating the conflicting urge to schematize and to personify".[40] Wiles comments on "the universalising features of the mask [which] allow and encourage figures to change".[41] It is significant, then, that from Halliwell's valuable discussion of references to *opsis* in *Poetics* and related instances at *Poetics* 4 and 17,[42] he concludes that "in so far as Aristotle envisages 'spectacle' as part of drama, he is thinking principally of the various aspects of the actors, rather than the stage setting as a whole".[43] Similarly, Else argues that what Aristotle means by *opsis* is the visible appearance of the dramatic characters, their masks and costumes.[44] The generic nature of the mask implies that *opsis* may include both what is visible and what is invisible, both what is explicit in the particular appearance and what is implicit in the universals which that appearance suggests.[45] In the case of the tragic mask, at least, Aristotle's *opsis* seems to exercise a cognitive function consistent with the potential of *mimesis* in art (*Po.* 4) and in poetry (*Po.* 9) to lead the spectator to inference and learning.[46]

Plato and mimetic art

Aristotle's recognition of the cognitive potential of imagery in *Poetics* 4, Else considers, is a challenge to Plato's views on art and poetry.[47] For

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[40] Rehm (1992) 39.

[41] Wiles (2007) 67.

[42] Halliwell (1986) 337–9.

[43] Halliwell (1986) 338–9.

[44] Else (1986) 136. See also comments by Lucas (1968) on *opsis* at 1449b33. For a different view on Aristotle's *opsis* see Hardison in Golden and Hardison (1968) 120.

[45] See below in section II, *Generic images*.

[46] With respect to the tragic mask, Wiles (2007) 237 makes no distinction between the experience of the spectator of art and of poetry when he argues that "the viewing of masks was akin to the viewing of sculptures and other images in sanctuaries".

[47] Else (1957) 129. On the other hand, for a discussion of Plato's views on the use of imagery in the form of *eikones* and *paradeigmata* in thinking see Pender (2003) 55–81.

Plato, it seems, mimetic art deals merely in appearances: the artist appeals to the senses (*R.* 10.596d9–598d), the poet to the emotions (*R.* 10.602c4–605c5). The poet—by "feeding and fattening up" the baser part of the soul (*R.* 10.605b3–4),[48] that is, τὸ δὲ πρὸς τὰς ἀναμνήσεις τε τοῦ πάθους καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ὀδυρμοὺς ἄγον (*R.* 10.604d8–9), "the part of our mind which urges us to remember the bad times and to express our grief, and which is insatiably greedy for tears"—"destroys the rational" (ἀπόλλυσι τὸ λογιστικόν, *R.* 10.605b4–5). As Halliwell comments, Plato veers toward restricting artistic and poetic *mimesis* to a "literalistic model of a transcription of material reality".[49] Aristotle, on the other hand, broadens the model so that *mimesis* can represent οἷα ἦν ἢ ἔστιν, ἢ οἷά φασιν καὶ δοκεῖ, ἢ οἷα εἶναι δεῖ,[50] "the things that were in the past, or are now, or that people say and think to be or those things that ought to be". In taking *mimesis* beyond the literal, surface reality, in using the particular to generate an awareness of the universal, Aristotle refutes the narrow artistic and poetic *mimesis* described by Plato, and in its place establishes a poetic *mimesis*, the effect of which can only be fully realised by the intellect and the emotions.

In summary, my discussion of Aristotle's *opsis* suggests that Aristotle did view the visual as important in the performance of tragic drama and that a poet who failed to visualise his dramatic action risked a failed play. The essential relation between *opsis* and *mimesis* in tragedy implies a function for *opsis* in the cognitive appeal of *mimesis*. When a spectator views a work of art, writes Aristotle, learning and inferring arise from the apprehension of the universal in the particular, "this thing is that kind of thing". Similarly, *mimesis* in dramatic poetry gives rise to the intellectual experience of realising universals. A useful vehicle for isolating the cognitive appeal of *mimesis* is metaphor. Aristotle describes verbal metaphor in language that echoes his description of *mimesis* (or visual metaphor in art)—a correspondence between this thing and that thing resulting in learning. The *mimesis* of tragic action includes both visual and non-visual elements. A central example in tragedy of *mimesis* activated by *opsis* and visual metaphor is the tragic mask. In the mask is contained the particular and

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48 Translations of *Republic* are by Waterfield (1993). See Halliwell (1988) *ad loc.* who comments on the animal imagery of these verbs.

49 Halliwell (1986) 125.

50 *Po.* 1460b10–11. See Halliwell (1986) 132–3.

the universal, a dramatic character and suffering humanity. The mask invites the type of inference associated with the cognitive appeal of *mimesis*, or, in the terms of cognitive psychology, "reasoning through imagery".[51] Finally, Plato's views on mimetic art highlight the extent to which Aristotle raised artistic and poetic *mimesis* from a mechanistic model to an effect that deeply engages the mind and the emotion.

Aristophanes' Frogs, Aristotle's katharsis and the cognitive appeal of tragedy

In support generally of the cognitive appeal of tragedy I conclude this section with reference to Aristophanes' *Frogs* and Aristotle's *katharsis*. What was the nature of the role of the tragedian in the instruction of his spectators?[52] In *Frogs* Aiskhylos puts this question to his opponent Euripides: ἀπόκριναί μοι, τίνος οὕνεκα χρὴ θαυμάζειν ἄνδρα ποιητήν; (1008), "Come, tell me what are the points for which a noble poet our praise obtains?".[53] Euripides answers: δεξιότητος καὶ νουθεσίας, ὅτι βελτίους τε ποιοῦμεν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐν ταῖς πόλεσιν (1009), "For his ready wit, and his counsels sage, and because the citizen folk he trains to be better townsmen and worthier men". Just how the poet improves the citizen is unclear, as the useful things (χρῆστα, 1035, 1056, 1057) which a poet should teach depend very much on the perspective of the speaker. According to Aristophanes' Aiskhylos the useful things Homer taught were military values (1035–6). In *Frogs*, Aiskhylos' own aims were to fill his spectators' minds with μεγάλων γνωμῶν καὶ διανοιῶν (1059) "mighty thoughts and heroic aims", whereas Euripides claims his drama invites his spectators to reason: ὥστ' ἤδη νοεῖν / ἅπαντα καὶ διειδέναι / τά τ' ἄλλα καὶ τὰς οἰκίας / οἰκεῖν ἄμεινον ἢ πρὸ τοῦ (974–7), "So now the people trace the springs, the sources and the roots of things, and manage all their households too far better than they used to do". Dionysos, on the other hand, looks to which of Aiskhylos and Euripides "shall best advise the city" (τῇ πόλει παραινέσειν μέλλῃ το χρηστόν, 1420–1), but then, in the manner of a comic poet, he restricts that advice to a particular, contemporary issue, Alkibiades. Aristophanes' portrayal of what the tragedians teach is thus "left vague

[51] Rumelhart and Norman (1988) 555.

[52] On the teaching role of the poets in *Frogs* see Croally (1994) 20–1, Saïd (1998) 276–7, Ford (2002) 200–1.

[53] Translations of *Frogs* are by Rogers (1924).

and does not distinguish morals from politics".[54] Improvement of the citizens sounds like change but whether tragedy served to reinforce the city's ideals or to question them remains unclear.[55]

Another approach to tragedy's cognitive potential for changing attitudes and belief systems is an understanding of Aristotle's *katharsis*, within the literary theory of *Poetics*, not as a concept of purification or purgation but of intellectual clarification.[56] Aristotle uses the term *katharsis* in his definition of tragedy as μίμησις...δι' ἐλέου καὶ φόβου περαίνουσα τὴν τῶν τοιούτων παθημάτων κάθαρσιν,[57] "an imitation...[which] achieves, through the representation of pitiable and fearful incidents, the katharsis of such fearful and pitiable incidents". Golden proposes that *katharsis* here "introduces into that definition [of tragedy] the insights of *Poetics* 1448b4–19 that identify intellectual pleasure as the goal of *mimesis*".[58] He supports his argument with reference to Plato's *Sophist* 226e–231b where *katharsis* "signifies learning and clarification",[59] and involves the transformation of a person from ignorance to one ἡγούμενον ἅπερ οἶδεν εἰδέναι μόνα (*Sph.* 230d), "believing he knows just the things he does know and no more".[60] Golden then revises the engagement with universals which arises out of *mimesis* (*Po.* 1451b5–11).[61] With his final reference from *Poetics* at 1453b8–14, which "links the pleasure of tragic *mimesis* to

[54] Saïd (1998) 276.

[55] On tragedy's function in questioning ideology see Croally (1994) 17–47, and for the opposite view, Mills (1997) *passim*. Cf. Saïd (1998) 275–95.

[56] See Golden (1992) 1–39. Nussbaum (2001) 388–91 also subscribes to this concept of *katharsis* although she modifies the 'intellectual' nature of the clarification (390). For arguments against both Golden and Nussbaum see Nuttall (1996) 8–14.

[57] *Po.* 1449b24–8.

[58] Golden (1992) 22. Sifakis (2001) 105–13 considers that Golden overemphasises the cognitive pleasure of tragedy at the expense of its emotional pleasure (105). Of Nussbaum's position Sifakis writes: "Although Nussbaum's reading comes close to my own...I disagree with her equation of the intellectual pleasure of *mimesis* described in *Poetics* 4 with catharsis" (107). Sifakis proposes instead that the pleasure of learning (*Po.* 1448b4–19) and the pleasure peculiar to tragedy, from pity and fear (*Po.* 1453b12), relate to each other as genus and species (108–13). *Katharsis*, in his theory, is the result of this relation and "is enhanced by a sense of satisfaction at having learnt and understood" (112). Based on his reading of Aristotle's *Politics* 1341a23–4 he cannot equate *katharsis* with 'clarification' (111, cf. 135–6), nor, it seems, can he separate *katharsis* from 'clarification'.

[59] Golden (1992) 22–4 at 24. Cf. Nussbaum (2001) 388–90 and Salkever (1986) 282–4.

[60] Translation by Benardete (1984).

[61] Golden (1992) 24–5.

that of *mimesis* in general",[62] he concludes that *katharsis* is "intellectual clarification". Using the three references from *Poetics* (1448b4–19, 1451b5–11, 1453b8–14) his argument seems to run in this way: through *mimesis* comes the pleasure of learning and inferring; this learning arises from the "movement from particular to universal involved in *mimesis*"; the pleasure of tragedy comes "from pity and fear through *mimesis*" (ἀπὸ ἐλέου καὶ φόβου διὰ μιμήσεως, *Po.* 1453b12).[63] Then, if I understand his argument correctly, the *katharsis* which is the process for purifying/purging/clarifying these emotions must relate to 'clarifying' since the pleasure arises from the *katharsis* and the pleasure of the *mimesis* which accomplishes the *katharsis* (μίμησις…περαίνουσα τὴν…κάθαρσιν, *Po.* 1449b24–8) arises from learning and inferring.

Golden completes his chapter on *katharsis* by privileging the role of "the word" in achieving the "intellectual or psychological effect" of *katharsis*.[64] "We deal with facts communicated to us verbally only by first intellectually processing them…The result of this intellectual process is the acquisition of new knowledge and insight or the deepening of previous levels of understanding".[65] As an example of this process Golden concludes with a lengthy discussion of book 24 of the *Iliad* and the transformation of Akhilleus. Central to that transformation, Golden writes, are the words Priam speaks to Akhilleus which remind him of his own aged father Peleus (*Il.* 24.486–507).[66] In developing this theme, however, and contrary to his privileging of 'the word' Golden writes: "It is with the *appearance* of Priam in his tent, evoking the *image* and fate of his own father, that Achilles begins to understand what has happened to himself and others…What he learns from perceiving the common destiny awaiting both those he has loved and those he has hated changes him for the better (24.582 ff.)".[67] Akhilleus'

[62] Golden (1992) 25.
[63] Golden (1992) 25.
[64] Golden (1992) 26–39 at 26.
[65] Golden (1992) 31.
[66] Golden (1992) 35.
[67] Golden (1992) 36. My italics. The process of understanding which Akhilleus undergoes is akin to that which Belfiore (1992) 358 describes for the spectator of tragedy: "Tragic imitation leads us to contemplate, for their own sake, objects that also arouse the emotions of pity and fear. In this way, tragedy teaches us about the objects of perception that arouse emotion, and leads us to understand them intellectually and emotionally". Belfiore also argues for the "insight" which Akhilleus acquires in this scene (351–3, and in particular n. 29 where she cites Macleod's commentary on *Iliad* book 24).

'improvement' through intellectual clarification takes us back to *Frogs*, and the role of the poet in the city. As Golden has shown, it is not only 'word' which can secure this insight, but also 'image': in the case of orally transmitted epic, a mental image; in the case of a tragic prop, an image that is perceived visually. Golden's example from *Iliad* 24 also takes us back to Aristotle and the pleasure and learning of *mimesis*. At that moment of Akhilleus' transformation, Priam is Peleus, οὗτος ἐκεῖνος, the hated one is the loved one, the two dissimilar elements of a metaphor joined by the universal sameness of vulnerable old age.

Intellectual and emotional effect of katharsis

Although Golden uses this scene between Akhilleus and Priam as an example of the 'intellectual' effect of *katharsis*, the scene is equally an example of the 'emotional' effect of *katharsis*.[68] As Belfiore writes: "Achilles' anger is purged by his pity", and it is his pity that leads him to insight.[69] Belfiore understands tragic *katharsis* as embracing all three concepts: purgation, purification and intellectual clarification.[70] Purgation of the emotions, she argues, "can also be called an emotional 'purification' in that it corrects and opposes our shameless tendencies", but it is the intellectual function of *katharsis* that she calls "most important".[71] Salkever, who also relates *katharsis* to clarification in Aristotle's *Poetics*, argues that pity and fear are the "humanizing emotions" which "the middle-class or agrarian democracy" can experience.[72] Pity and fear can draw us to the undeserved misfortune of τὸν ὅμοιον (*Po.* 1453a5–6), "someone like ourselves".[73] Golden himself cites von Fritz on *katharsis* and the equal importance of its cognitive function and emotional effect.[74] As a proponent of the emotional function of *katharsis* Segal can also write—"For Aristotle, it is true, the emotions also have a cognitive basis and so presumably can be

[68] This dual function of *katharsis* is hinted at by Jones (1962) 21: "Plato held it against poetry that its emotional appeal is a threat to the authority of reason… A better psychologist than Plato, [Aristotle] believed that there is more to be gained by educating the emotions than by repressing them. The doctrine of *katharsis* is central to this argument".

[69] Belfiore (1992) 353.

[70] Belfiore (1992) 348–9.

[71] Belfiore (1992) 348–9.

[72] Salkever (1986) 294–6 at 296.

[73] On pity see Konstan (2001) *passim* and (2005) 48–66.

[74] Golden (1992) 25 n. 25, von Fritz (1962) xxvi.

'clarified' by intellectual processes".[75] My position is best expressed by Easterling in her response to Segal.[76] Easterling stresses the interrelation of the two functions rather than a hierarchy between them. She notes that "for Aristotle the cathartic process seems to be a continuous whole", and that the responses of the spectators to tragic recognition "are not separated off…into immediate emotional release and (often subsequent) intellectual reflection" as Segal proposes.[77] It is this interrelation of the emotional and intellectual that we see at work in the scene between Akhilleus and Priam.

The transformation of Akhilleus is not unlike the "recognition" by the tragic hero which heralds "a change from ignorance to knowledge"[78] with life-changing repercussions. In the recognition of the abstract through visual and non-visual representations the spectators too may be enacting a process not unlike this famous ἀναγνώρισις of the tragic plot. Although it is unlikely that Aristotle envisaged that images could make such an impact on the spectator, nevertheless their role in learning does suggest that the images of tragedy may contribute to leading the spectator to a radical rethinking of issues that are problematical.

II *The sorts of images we find in tragedy*

In the discussion that follows, I look at visually perceived and mental/verbal images and the way they refer to and connect past and present. I suggest that the imagery of metaphor can not only facilitate such connections but can lead to variation and change in thinking. I begin with a dictionary definition of an "image" and identify seven categories which are relevant to the types of imagery we find in tragedy.[79] The first four relate to what is visually perceived, the final three to images in the mind. Of visually perceived imagery the first is the kind of representation of an object that we find in a statue or a picture. Next is the "optical appearance" of an object that we would see in a mirror. Third is a "semblance" or "likeness", fourth a "symbol" or "emblem".

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75 Segal (1996) 155.
76 Easterling (1996) 173–81.
77 Easterling (1996) 178.
78 *Poetics* 1452a30–1.
79 *NewSOED* (Brown [1993]) *s.v.* "Imagery".

The final three categories involve the use of mental imagery, in the first place in the picturing of an object in the mind,[80] secondly in descriptive passages, and finally, and perhaps most importantly, in figurative language. In addition to these categories of mental imagery, music in tragedy and the aural experience can also evoke images in the mind.

Visually perceived images

In tragedy these categories appear frequently, although neither in the straightforward way assigned to them in the dictionary definition nor often without overlap. The examples below serve to isolate the sort of images we find in tragedy.

Art objects

In the first category of images as art objects, statues or pictures, Herbert Golder has found "more than 1000 allusions to art objects…and over a hundred metaphorical allusions" in tragedy.[81] That Herakles' poisoned robe clings to him ὥστε τέκτονος χιτών (S. *Tr.* 768–9), "like the work of a sculptor",[82] and that Hekabe knows about ships γραφῇ (E. *Tro.* 687) "from painted scenes"[83] are just two examples, the first metaphorical, the second a straight allusion. Zeitlin also comments on the need in certain instances for the theatre to "invent an iconography".[84] The Pythia in the *Eumenides* of Aiskhylos strives to describe the Erinyes by reference to other female monsters (A. *Eu.* 49–50) which she, and presumably the spectators, know already through artistic representations.[85]

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[80] A particularly memorable example of this type of mental imagery occurs in the *Odyssey* when the disguised Odysseus describes himself to Penelope as she would have remembered and visualised him from his appearance at their parting twenty years previously. He says: αὐτάρ τοι ἐρέω ὥς μοι ἰνδάλλεται ἦτορ (*Od.* 19.224), "Still, I will tell you, in the way my heart imagines him" (translations of the *Odyssey* are by Lattimore [1975]). There are two precious objects in this description, the pin which held Odysseus' cloak (*Od.* 19.226–31) and his shining tunic (*Od.* 19.232–5). Cf. Steiner (2001) 281–2. Such focusing on precious objects is also relevant to my discussion of tragic props below.

[81] Golder (1992) 327.

[82] Translation by Jameson (1957).

[83] Translation by Lattimore (1958).

[84] Zeitlin (1994) 140.

[85] Zeitlin (1994) 140.

Optical appearance

The image as an "optical appearance" is perhaps manifested in the εἴδωλα of tragedy. These are recognisable forms which lack substance. In the philosophy of Leukippos and Demokritos εἴδωλα are "faithful replicas of the physical objects they replace".[86] Rudolph Arnheim relates the philosophers' definition of εἴδωλα to the eidetic images of modern psychology—"a kind of photographic memory" which represents mental imagery at its most elementary.[87] In the reflections of Odysseus (S. *Ai.* 125–6), Philoktetes (S. *Ph.* 946–7) and Oidipous (S. *OK* 109–10), εἴδωλα, as the mere shadows of the heroes, express the vulnerability, even void of human existence. The εἴδωλον of Helen which Hera sends to Troy in place of the real Helen must have corporeal qualities for the plausibility of the story (E. *Hel.* 34, 116), but it is finally as insubstantial as light as it returns to the sky (605–6) from which it was fashioned (34).[88] Nevertheless, the *eidolon* of the *Helen*, is always before the eyes of the spectators in the character of Helen herself, even as it is in the characters of Odysseus, Philoktetes and Oidipous in the plays mentioned above.

Semblance

Of the third category of images, those that call to mind a resemblance, two evocative and memorable instances from tragedy are found in the likeness of Laios to Oidipous on which Iokasta remarks: μορφῆς δὲ τῆς σῆς οὐκ ἀπεστάτει πολύ (S. *OT* 743), "He was a tall man…and in his form not unlike you";[89] and Elektra's discovery of Orestes' footprints: ποδῶν ὁμοῖοι τοῖς τ' ἐμοῖσιν ἐμφερεῖς (A. *Kh.* 206), "Look. They match each other—and are similar in shape to mine".[90] But it is Euripides in his *Helen* who explores this theme intensively, as well as its implications for visual perception and the "interplay between illusion and reality".[91]

[86] Arnheim (1966) 63. Cf. Ford (2002) 165–72.

[87] Arnheim (1966) 64.

[88] Euripides' εἴδωλον appears to have been adapted from a version of the Helen story by the sixth-century Greek lyric poet Stesikhoros. See Page (1962) 104–6 and Campbell (1991) 92–6.

[89] Translation by Grene (1991).

[90] Translation by Ewans (1995).

[91] Zeitlin (1994) 142.

Symbolic images

In the fourth category, the funeral urn in Sophokles' *Elektra* or Klytaimnestra's welcoming tapestry in Aiskhylos' *Agamemnon* provide examples of symbolic or emblematic images.[92] These, at least, are the terms in which Lebeck and Goheen discuss the tapestry, and Segal discusses the urn, along with other Sophoklean "symbols", Aias' sword (*Aias*), Philoktetes' bow (*Philoktetes*) and the robe in the *Trakhiniai*.[93] Goheen defines what he means by symbolic imagery as "concretes of perception, 'things',...employed to represent ideas, attitudes, or qualities of thought".[94] Lebeck refers to "a universal symbol...which gives insight".[95] Segal writes of the "specific and elusive" nature of symbols, of a "concreteness" that "focuses meaning in specific and precise detail" and of "relations to other details" which make their "meaning manifold and suggestive".[96] These accounts by Lebeck, Goheen and Segal suggest that the objects they denote as "visual symbols" in tragedy are rooted in visual metaphor which gives rise to creative thought. This capacity for perception itself to stimulate abstract thinking may even provide the origins of metaphoric thought.[97]

The εἴδωλον, the resemblance, and the symbol, although calling to mind what may not be present or may be abstract, nevertheless have a visible manifestation in the acting-area, a concreteness and a sense of presentness. Allusions to art objects, although they ask the character or the spectators to imagine the quality of a painting or a statue, may also be fixed to what is concrete and abiding in the present stage action. These categories of imagery invite perception. In the dictionary categories of mental imagery, on the other hand, although what is being recalled is most likely to be an image of something concrete, it is not visible to the eye and, as a product of a memory of objects, people and

92 For a discussion of the tapestry as symbol and the images to which it relates see Lebeck (1971) 63–8, and ch. 8. Taplin (1978) ch. 6.1.1 comments on the interweaving levels at which the image of the tapestry works: "Some meanings are more prominent than others; some are explicit, some implicit; some literal, some symbolic; some are invoked at the time, others emerge into focus only in retrospect" (82). Goheen (1955) 113–37 offers further insights into the symbolism of the tapestry (115–26). For the symbolism of the urn see Segal (1980–1) 134–7.

93 Lebeck (1971) 63–8, ch. 8; Goheen (1955) 113–37; Segal (1980–1) 134–7.

94 Goheen (1955) 113.

95 Lebeck (1971) 67–8 at 67.

96 Segal (1980–1) 125.

97 Paivio (1979) 156 cites Langer (*Philosophy in a New Key* [London 1948 reprint] 14, 117–8) and Arnheim (1969) 62.

events, its most immediate reference is to the past. Although I have drawn a distinction between perception and memory images, between present and past, the one is constantly supplementing the other. What is perceived in the present is completed by what is remembered from the past,[98] and current mental images spring from a memory of past perceptions.[99]

Mental images

Objects

Mental imagery in the tragic theatre of fifth century Athens allows the dramatist to draw on the wealth of images which the spectators bring to performance. Such image-making at its simplest may require of the spectators to picture familiar objects that are significant in the play, such as Ion's cradle (E. *Io.* 18–19) or the robe given by Deianeira to Herakles in Sophokles' *Trakhiniai* (602) or the shields in Aiskhylos' *Seven against Thebes* (375–676).[100] Not that I mean to suggest that these images remain 'simple' or that they are not 'precious', but that

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[98] Arnheim (1969) 80–7 at 84.

[99] Arnheim (1969) 98–100. Arnheim approaches the relationship between perception and mental imagery from the direction of the arts and anecdotal evidence. Images represent experience through "pictures" and "symbols"; the picture function tends to the particular and the less abstract, the symbolic function tends to the general and the more abstract (137–9; 150–1 and Fig. 50). Both these functions are at work in thinking or conceptualising (chs 9 and 10). In psychology the relationship between perception and mental imagery is approached from two perspectives: the first concerns the "intrinsic" nature of imagery and the second the "extrinsic" function of imagery. For the distinction between "intrinsic" and "extrinsic", see Kaufmann and Helstrup (1993) 123–50 at 126–7. The first of these perspectives influences the work of Kosslyn (1980, 1983, 1994), Ahsen ([1986] 1–45), Richardson ([1983] 197–226) and Finke ([1985] 236–59). The second perspective informs the work of psychologists Kaufmann and Helstrup and their interest in the role of imagery in thinking and problem solving. In their article cited above in this note, however, they bring both perspectives, nature and function, to bear on the possibility of reconstruing an image (128). They consider an image as having "both symbolic and perceptual properties", as being a bridge between "thought and sensation" (134). At an empirical level Kaufmann and Helstrup seem to attribute to images similar properties and functions to those advanced by Arnheim through his anecdotal evidence.

[100] Although Deianeira refers to "this" (τόνδ') robe at 580 when she reports to the Khoros that she has applied the centaur's charm to it, the sunless conditions necessary to prevent the poison from reacting (606–7, 691–2) make it clear that in the sun-filled acting-area the robe was already contained within a chest (τόδ' ἄγγος, 622). It is not until Herakles calls on all to see him ἐκ καλυμμάτων (1078) "unveiled" that the spectators visually perceive the robe. Similarly, Ion's cradle is a thing of the imagination until the Priestess presents it and its contents as visible items late in the play (1337).

in the first instance they relate to what the spectators know or have seen before (προεωρακώς, Arist. *Po.* 1448b17). The cradle, the robe and the shields are, indeed, central images and, with the exception of the shields, are eventually visually realised props in the play itself. Thus there is an overlap with the symbol/emblem category of visually perceived images.

Descriptive passages

More sophisticated image-building is needed for the construction in the mind of scenes or events of the kind met in *ekphraseis* or messenger reports. The success of such complex mental pictures would depend, if we follow Aristotle, on the pleasure and learning that arises from imitation of what has been seen before. In the examples of descriptive passages discussed below we shall see the varied sources of mental imagery familiar to spectators that the poet may draw upon. Oral tradition, art, religion, theatre and sporting contests are all part of this image bank. In the examples of *ekphraseis* we shall also witness an enactment of the pleasure and learning of the spectator role as the characters themselves take delight in the scenes they describe. The messenger, too, as de Jong notes, is a θεατής (E. *Hik.* 652), "a spectator", who "tells other characters on stage (and the spectators in the theatre) what they have not seen themselves".[101] Barlow finds in Euripidean messenger speeches a "visual clarity" which is both persuasive and which endorses the "objective truth" of the report.[102] The fact that messenger reports were popular themes in vase paintings representing scenes from the plays of Euripides is a confirmation of their "visual appeal".[103]

[101] De Jong (1991) 9–10, Appendix B: 183–4. Zeitlin (1995) 177. Cf. Barlow (1971) 61–78, and Barrett (2002) 74–6.

[102] Barlow (1971) at 62 and 77–8. De Jong (1991) ch. 2 argues against the "objectivity" of the messenger's report. Barrett (2002) 76, on the other hand, draws attention to the "conflict between the messenger's role as an individual eyewitness and as narrator with a claim to extradiegetic status". Cf. Barrett 17–22.

[103] Zeitlin (1994) 143. Cf. De Jong (1991) 118, and Green (1996) 17–30 and (1999) 37–63. Green's articles point to the popularity of messenger scenes on vase paintings in the fourth century BC. In addition to their "visual appeal" (see [1999] 49), Green attributes the popularity of the messenger scene to the spectators' interest in narrative ([1996] 28), the increasing importance in the fourth century of the role of the messenger and his function as an intermediary between actor and spectator ([1999] 53), and the practical application, that the scenes are appropriate to the funerary vases on which they are commonly found ([1996] 27–8, [1999] 51, 54).

The three examples of *ekphrasis* that follow are taken from Euripides' *Iphigeneia in Aulis* and *Ion*, and Aiskhylos' *Theoroi*. In the Parodos of *Iphigeneia in Aulis* (164–302) the Khoros of women of Khalkis describe the spectacle of the encampment and fleet of the Greek force waiting at Aulis. The women's description is punctuated by reference to their own 'seeing' (171, 191, 192, 210, 218, 274). This visual response evolves into their delight as spectators (232–4), and concludes with the way the visual experience will serve their memories in the future (299–302). In another Euripidean Parodos, in the *Ion* (184–236), another Khoros of young women, the servants of Kreousa, take visual delight (ὄμμα τέρψει, 231) in the scenes on Apollo's temple.[104] There is an element of instruction in both these examples. The women of Khalkis now have a visual memory (μνήμην, *IA* 302) to inform what they hear (κλύουσα, *IA* 301). Kreousa's servants, who are providing to the spectators a commentary on the experience of looking at works of art, do not merely "recognize the subjects of the reliefs at Delphi" as Lucas claims,[105] but draw out their common thread and universal meaning of victory over a monstrous foe, be that Herakles' defeat of the hydra (*Io*. 191–2), Bellerophon's defeat of the khimaira (*Io*. 201–4), or the gods' victory over the giants (*Io*. 206–18), and in particular their own Athene (211), who, at the end of the play, will take Apollo's place.[106]

For the spectators in the theatre, the first of these examples of *ekphrasis* is embedded in their own familiarity with Homer's *Iliad*, with the catalogue of ships at *Iliad* 2, and that Homeric experience of gazing in wonder (θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι), which is here both instantiated by the Khoros and alluded to in their accolade to Meriones (θαῦμα βροτοῖσιν, *IA* 202). Zeitlin notes aspects of the scene which may have been reminiscent to the spectators of the subjects and techniques of familiar artwork: the layout of the scene may recall "monumental painting"; the game of draughts (*IA* 192–8), depictions on vase paintings.[107] Zeitlin

[104] Again verbs of seeing punctuate the Khoros' response (*Io*. 190, 193, 194, 201, 205, 206, 208, 209, 211, 214). For a detailed discussion of both of these *ekphraseis* see Zeitlin (1994) 147–56 (*Ion*) and 157–71 (*Iphigeneia in Aulis*). A further example of Euripidean *ekphrasis* is to be found in his *Phoinissai* 103–95 which Zeitlin also discusses in the above article at 171–96. On the *Phoinissai ekphrasis* see also the comments of Barlow (1971) 57–60 and her observations on Euripides' use of contemporary painting techniques in the way Antigone describes the scene.

[105] Lucas (1968) at 1448b13.

[106] See Lee (1997) note at 209–10.

[107] Zeitlin (1995) 182–3.

also draws attention to the use of the emblems on the ships, which, in the way of the shield devices in Aiskhylos' *Seven Against Thebes*, may act as "visual cues" both to the memory of the Khoros and to the spectators.[108] Not only may the spectators find the emblems useful but they may have enjoyed the cognitive experience of watching current ideas about visual cues and memory at work. Such visual cueing was first attributed to Simonides and was believed to be of interest to fifth-century sophists.[109] The example from Euripides' *Ion* recalls for the theatre spectators, as for the Khoros itself, memories of Athens and her artistic tributes to mythical victories represented in the sculpture of the Acropolis and the Parthenon, in vase paintings, and most particularly (given the Khoros' reference to its weaving, 197) the image of Athene's defeat of Enkelados (209–11) woven into the Panathenaic *peplos*, and the inference of Athenian triumph which that image represented.

The third example of *ekphrasis* is of a different kind from the previous two in that the object that draws the admiring gaze of the characters is also visible to the spectators; this scene is described in a fragment from Aiskhylos' satyr play, *Theoroi*.[110] A Khoros of satyrs bring likenesses (εἰκοὺ[ς], 1) of themselves as votive offerings to decorate the temple of Poseidon Isthmios (11). These beautifully painted (καλλίγραπτον, 12) objects are a souce of delight for the satyrs who marvel at their realism (6) and imagine that not even their own mothers could distinguish between the appearance and the reality. Indeed, thinking the image to be her own child a mother would turn away and wail (15). The joke here for the spectators is that an image that is designed to terrify is shown for the illusion that it is.[111] At the same time, the actors who are playing the satyrs play a joke on the spectators, for if it amuses them that the satyrs find pleasure in the artistic *mimesis* of something frightening (in their case, their own ugly likenesses),[112] this is also what the spectators themselves do when they watch a tragic play. This

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108 Zeitlin (1995) 184.

109 Zeitlin (1995) 185. See also Yates (1966) ch. 2. For further interest in optics in the fifth century see O'Sullivan (2000) 355 n. 15.

110 Cf. Steiner (2001) 45–9.

111 This contrasts with the shield images designed to frighten the characters (and spectators) in Aiskhylos' *Seven Against Thebes* (397–9, 489–90). O'Sullivan (2000) 355 n. 16 links ἔκπληξις with Aiskhylos' visual techniques. See in particular Aristophanes' *Frogs* 962–3.

112 Cf. Aristotle and the pleasure of *mimesis* κἂν ᾖ μὴ ἡδὺ αὐτὸ τὸ μεμιμημένον (*Rh.* 1371b8), "even if the object of imitation is not pleasant".

ekphrasis of theatre props is a lively example of the way the images and experience of theatre itself become part of the dramatists' image bank. If what the satyrs are carrying are masks,[113] the props would bring a further level to the theatrical and religious self-consciousness of the scene,[114] but even if, as Krumeich proposes, the satyrs carry portraits of themselves,[115] the humorous effect could be much the same. Certainly both masks and pictures of satyrs are familiar votive offerings.[116]

These examples illustrate the pleasure and learning inherent in the role of the spectator as well as calling to mind a function of oral tradition, art, religion and theatre itself in the *mimesis* of dramatic action. Another important source of the mental imagery of descriptive passages in tragic drama are sporting contests.

In the ancient Greek world sporting and theatrical spectacle often took place at locations near each other. At Dodone in north-west Greece, the seating on the northern side of the stadium backs onto the western retaining wall of the theatre. At Delphi and Epidauros there is proximity between theatre and stadium. The physical features of these sanctuary sites reflect festivals which incorporate both sporting and theatre contests. In the *Theoroi* Wiles notes that the satyrs who come to "the Panhellenic festival of Poseidon at Isthmia…to participate as 'theoric' dancers" under the patronage of Dionysos turn instead to athletics and its patron Poseidon.[117] In Athens, the Panathenaia could provide the sporting reference for contests described in the drama of the city Dionysia.

It is the spectators' remembered experience which underlies the plausibility and emotional engagement of such messenger narratives as those describing the athletic victories of Orestes in the Pythian Games and his close competition in the chariot race (S. *El.* 681–9, 738–44),

[113] For this interpretation see Easterling (1997a) 49, Green (1994) 45, O'Sullivan (2000) 357, Zeitlin (1994) 138. Cf. Taplin (1977) 420–1.

[114] The mask of theatre is a visual reminder of the mask of Dionysiac cult, an overlay of religion and theatre to which I shall return in my discussion of the *Bakkhai* below at ch. 3. See Rehm (1992) 13–14 for this connection between "the performance culture of Athens" and "Dionysiac worship and play-acting". Cf. Wiles (2007) ch. 9 and in particular his comments on the *Theoroi* at 205–11.

[115] Krumeich (2000) 176–92. Against Krumeich see Wiles (2007) 206.

[116] For the practice of hanging masks in the temple of Dionysos see Green (1994) 45–6, and n. 60 where he refers to a fragment from Aristophanes (fr. 131K=130 K-A) in which frightening masks are placed in the temple. For pictures as votive offerings see Krumeich (2000) 178.

[117] Wiles (2007) 205. Cf. 239.

or Hippolytos' desperate attempt to control his terrified and bolting horses (E. *Hipp.* 1213–39). This same remembered experience authenticates the *ekphrasis* by the women of Khalkis of Diomedes throwing the discus (E. *IA* 199–200) or of Akhilleus racing in armour against the four-horsed chariot of Eumelos (E. *IA* 206–30). Akhilleus' training (a scene described in detail within the larger spectacle) may have recalled to the theatre spectators the prestigious *apobates* competition in the Panathenaic festival.[118] This contest was reserved for Athenian citizens, for the best men, who could simulate the situation of warfare by running in their armour, and this event provided the best spectacle (D. *Erot.* 61.23–5). At line 709 of his commentary on Sophokles' *Elektra* Kaibel draws attention to the way the dramatist consciously blends the spectators' memory of Homer and their own experiences of chariot races.[119] Kaibel writes: "Die nachfolgende Schilderung des Wettrennens steht sichtlich unter dem Einfluss des Ψ der Ilias, nicht weil Soph. aus eigenem Anschauen ein solches Spiel nicht hätte schildern können, sondern weil es ihm Freude machte die Schilderung des alten Dichters in der Seele der Zuhörer, die sie mit eigenen Erfahrungen vergleichen konnten, zu erneuern".

In addition to their associations from oral poetry and actual experience, images from the stadium and hippodrome are reinforced in art, especially in representations on Panathenaic vases and in statues. We can see Akhilleus in the terracotta statue of a warrior with greaves and still brightly coloured cloak found in the stadium at Olympia,[120] and Orestes at the front of the group of the runners depicted on Panathenaic amphoreis, or in the hunched charioteer detailed on the outside of the "kylix of Ross" (Siana cup).[121] We can also see the emotions evoked by these events on a vase fragment showing tiers of excited spectators at the chariot race in the games for Patroklos.[122] Nigel Crowther argues that Greeks were not too unlike Romans in their enjoyment of the

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[118] See Zeitlin (1995) 196 n. 36.

[119] Kaibel (1967).

[120] Statue of warrior, c. 490 BC, Olympia Archaeological Museum. In challenging the best of the four-horse teams, Akhilleus approaches the company of the gods as we see in a vase painting of Athene running beside a four-horse team (Neils [1992a] 21, Fig 6, Beazley no. 303320).

[121] "Kylix of Ross", c. 570 BC, National Archaeological Museum, Athens, no. 529, Beazley no. 300604.

[122] Fragment from a black-figured dinos, sixth century BC, National Archaeological Museum, Athens, no. 15499, Beazley no. 305075.

violence and frequent accidents of equestrian events.[123] The spectators' detachment from the plight of individual charioteers, Crowther proposes, may be the result of a shift in emphasis, at least at Olympia, to the owner of the chariot and team.[124] It was the owner, as in the case of Alkibiades (Th. 6.16.2), to whom the prestige of winning fell,[125] rather than to the charioteer as was the case for Homeric heroes. At the same time, even if the spectators did take pleasure in accidents, where the charioteer had their admiration they would fear for his safety (D. *Erot.* 61.29). In the case of the charioteer Orestes, who has already won the attention and admiration of the crowd by his athletic achievements (S. *El.* 681–9),[126] we could expect an emotional engagement by the theatre spectators in his appalling and fatal accident, false though they know the report of it to be.

I have gone to some length in my discussion of descriptive passages to suggest the pervasiveness of mental imagery and its foundation in what the spectators have seen before. The conviction that what one sees is more reliable than what one hears is entrenched in Greek thought from Homer onwards. Not only is the terminology for the theatre and the spectator reflective of the activity of sight but the language of the plays is dominated by verbs and nouns of seeing. In the *Oidipous Tyrannos* the central image concerns sight and its cognate, knowing. The props, then, on which I shall increasingly focus, will not appear as isolated images but as part of a framework and method of viewing, which, despite Aristotle's reservations about *opsis*,[127] insinuate the visual into the heart of the fifth-century dramatic experience. Green writes: "There is a good deal of evidence, both literary and pictorial, to suggest that what people perceived as one of the most exciting things about theatre when it was first being invented was the visual spectacle".[128] This act of visual perception as opposed to imagining and remembering set tragedy apart from other performances of poetry.[129] Behind the excitement of visual perception, however, is the 'meaning'

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123 N. Crowther (1994) 121–33 at 132.

124 N. Crowther (1994) 133.

125 N. Crowther (1994) 133.

126 N. Crowther (1994) 133 comments that "the average Greek would find it easier to identify with competitors in the gymnastic rather than the equestrian events".

127 *Po.* 1450b17; cf. Halliwell (1986) 337–43, and Janko (1984) 228–9, and above in section I, *The importance of the visual in tragic performance.*

128 Green (1994) 17.

129 Green (1994) 16–17.

which *opsis* brings to performance. Arnheim refers to "'meaning' in perception" as "the memory effect of past images upon present images".[130] He is commenting on the relation between the images of real experience and the images of art. Behind the imagery of *ekphraseis* and messenger reports we have seen the spectators' images of real experience, of their oral traditions, of art, of religion, theatre and sport. Yet this memory material, fashioned by descriptive passages, as Taplin writes, "only matters in so far as it is brought to bear on the focus of the play on stage".[131]

We can see "'meaning' in perception" at work in the way the mental imagery of the Paidagogos' story of Orestes' death modifies the perceived image of the urn in Sophokles' *Elektra*. The spectators know that Orestes is alive and well and using the urn as a deceitful ploy, but nonetheless their perception of the urn is altered by their engagement with a story which resonates with the actions of Homeric heroes, with artistic representations, and with an experience that is familiar and affective.[132] Despite the spectators' superior knowledge they can empathise with the emotions of a bereaved sister and a bereaved mother, even a Klytaimnestra. At a rational plot-driven level the urn is an image of deceit for the spectators, but at an emotional, past-experiential level it is an image of death. Its 'meaning' lies in an overlay of both these associations, of death and deceit. That a funerary urn could connote 'deceit' is an innovation of the dramatist and is indicative of the manipulation and transforming of an image that can facilitate a process of thought.[133]

Since my subsequent theoretical discussion of images in this introduction narrows to the visually perceived theatrical prop I shall continue to use Elektra's urn as an example. This prop, however, receives a more thorough treatment in chapter two.

Figurative language

The third category of mental imagery in our dictionary definition is that of figurative language, metaphors and similes. In tragedy the use

[130] Arnheim (1966) 66.

[131] Taplin (1977) 26.

[132] On the "transference of affect" see Bartlett (1925) 16–28 at 23–4.

[133] This is not an activity peculiar to drama, but as Cohen (1976) 513–23 remarks, in our everyday use of visual images "they are constructed, modified and manipulated" (516) for our own purposes.

of verbal metaphor is identified particularly with the poetic style of Aiskhylos.[134] Rather than with verbal metaphor, here again I am concerned with the interweaving of visual and verbal metaphors that centres on the use of perceived or imagined props by all three tragedians: Aiskhylos, Sophokles and Euripides. The props function as metaphorical symbols.[135]

Barlow, who defends Euripides' preference for "descriptive language which is sensuous but not metaphorical",[136] marks an important characteristic of metaphors, even Euripidean metaphors, as a means of "linking imagery which may appear in different parts of a play".[137] In the case of metaphors associated with central props in the plays, I would argue that this "linking" has the potential to transform the memory imagery from the past, and the present visible images of the theatre, and to excite in the spectator an awareness of a third dimension to the function of imagery as a source of insight into new meaning for the future. By changing the conceptual framework on which we base our actions "new metaphors have the power to create a new reality".[138]

Elektra's urn undergoes just such a metaphoric change. At the climax of her lament over the urn Elektra addresses the ashes of Orestes asking him to welcome her (δέξαι) "into this your house" (ἐς τὸ σὸν τόδε στέγος, 1165).[139] She represents the urn in figurative language as a "house" (στέγος) with a connotation unique to this instance.[140] That it is indeed a house that Elektra has in mind is emphasised by the preposition ἐς with the imperative δέξαι.[141] The metaphor she chooses links the image of the urn to the tomb that has been planned for her by Klytaimnestra and Aigisthos (στέγῃ, 382) as well as to the royal house of Mykenai (282, 1308, 1386, 1392, 1404, 1497) which is represented visually by the *skene*.[142] The backward-looking assimilation of the urn with her own tomb is not too surprising, but that this new metaphor

134 Barlow (1971) 2.

135 For a discussion of this concept see Langer (1967) vol. 1, part II, ch. 4 and (1951) 139. Cf. Goatly (1997) sections 4.5.1 and 4.5.5, and Indurkha (1992) section 1.5.

136 Barlow (1971) vii.

137 Barlow (1971) 96.

138 Lakoff and Johnson (1980) 145.

139 Uncited translations are my own.

140 See *Lexicon Sophocleum* (Ellendt [1958]) *s.v.* "Στέγος".

141 I am indebted to Kevin Lee ✝ for this point.

142 For further discussion of the relationship of urn, house, tomb and *skene* see ch. 2 below.

might draw the urn into imagistic associations with the house of Atreus may create for the spectators an unexpected understanding of the force of revenge, a changed understanding that can be retrieved in the future by the familiar image of a funeral urn.[143]

Music

Finally, music in tragedy provides another source of mental imagery for the spectator. *Melopoiia* along with *opsis* is listed by Aristotle as one of the necessary parts of tragic *mimesis*,[144] and one which provides the "greatest of the linguistic adornments" (μέγιστον τῶν ἡδυσμάτων, *Po.* 1450b16). Golden's translation reflects the reader of a text rather than the spectator of a performance.[145] In contrast, Sifakis argues that the function of music in tragic *mimesis* is to help "to reveal ethical qualities and emotions that lie beyond the limits and expressive capabilities of ordinary speech",[146] and he illustrates this function of music in the *kommos* of Aiskhylos' *Khoephoroi* (306–478).[147] The modes, melodies and rhythms of ancient Greek music, he writes, convey quite precisely certain actions and moral attitudes,[148] so that music "contributes, not only to the pleasure of the spectator in a general sense, but to the *lucidity* of representation".[149] Sifakis does not consider directly the relation of music to mental imagery although his quotations from Arab commentators on the *Poetics*, Avicenna and Averroes, suggest the complementarity of image and sound in the *mimesis* of actions and moral character.[150]

On the "emotional impact" of Greek music on the ancient spectator Hall notes the scarcity of evidence; her reference to the "personification" of the power of the human voice in the sirens (*Od.* 12.39–54, 158–200; E. *Hel.* 167–73), however, constructs something of the connection between sound and mental image which may have existed in

[143] On images as "retrieval cues" see Paivio (1983a) 1–18 at 10.
[144] *Po.* 1450a7–10.
[145] See Hardison's commentary in Golden and Hardison (1968) 121, 132. Cf. Sifakis (2001) 54–5, (2002) 158–60, and Hall (2002) 4.
[146] Sifakis (2001) 59.
[147] Sifakis (2001) 60–3.
[148] Sifakis (2001) 64–70.
[149] Sifakis (2001) 53.
[150] On Avicenna see Sifakis (2001) 69–70; at 172 n. 46 Sifakis quotes Averroes: "'The function of the melody in poetry is to prepare the soul to accept the image of what one intends to imitate'".

the minds of ancient audiences of epic and tragedy.[151] The popularity of representing in art Odysseus' encounter with the sirens does seem to speak of the importance of this connection between the aural and the image, as the power of song is captured by pictorial representation.[152]

More specific connections between image and sound are made by Csapo in his discussion of the New Music of the last quarter of the fifth century.[153] Csapo argues that the double-*aulos* is the most mimetic of instruments,[154] and its influence on the verse of New Music sees a subordinating of verbal logic to the connotations of words.[155] In this re-ordering of priorities, he writes: "The preference for images to concepts is typically combined with an appeal to the senses, especially to the ears and to the eye of the mind".[156] These are interesting observations particularly in the light of my examination below in section III of the role of imagery at the innovative end of thinking.

The discussion above of the categories of imagery has introduced some of the functions of imagery which are involved in thinking and problem solving: the interplay between visually perceived and mental images, the dynamism of imagery as it links ideas, the learning which comes with identifying that this is that, and the simultaneity of imagery as it brings together past, present and future through memory and insight. Finally, in this section, I consider the relationship of imagery and time in the making of meaning, and the generic quality of images in tragedy and their relevance to thinking.

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[151] See Hall (2002) 35. On tragic song see also Hall (1999) 96–122.

[152] In Odette Touchefeu-Meynier's catalogue of iconography in *LIMC VI.1* and *2* (1992) *s.v.* "Odysseus", 1. 947, the number of artistic representations under the category "Ulysse et les Sirènes" (39) is second only to that of "Ulysse et Polyphème" (71), and greater than representations of Odysseus in the Trojan war (35), or of Odysseus' return to Ithaka (25). For an incident that is told in fifty-seven lines (and much of what Kirke tells Odysseus [*Od.*12.39–54] is repeated in what Odysseus tells his crew and his Phaiakian audience [*Od.* 12.158–200]) the iconography of the siren scene registers a remarkable interest, and even more so when we recall that the principal feature of this scene is not visual but aural.

[153] Csapo (2004) 207–48.

[154] Csapo (2004) 219. On the *aulos* and the *auletai* see also Wilson (1999) 58–95 and (2002) 39–68, and on the kithara and *kitharoidoi*, see Wilson (2004) 269–306.

[155] Csapo (2004) 226.

[156] Csapo (2004) 227. Cf. Barlow (1971) 55 who comments on the monodies in Euripides' late plays: "Often, the colourful elaboration of pictorial language seems out of all proportion to the emotion it purportedly illustrates".

Past, present and future

In an essay on "Time" Augustine considers the integration of past and future into the present.[157]

> Wherever [past and future] are and whatever they are, they *are* only as present. When we relate the past truly, it is not the things themselves that are brought forth from our memory—for these have passed away: but words conceived from the images of the things: for the things stamped their prints upon the mind as they passed through it by way of the senses... Whether the case is similar with prophecies of things to come—namely that images of things which are not yet are seen in advance as now existent—...I do not know. But this I do know, that we ordinarily consider our future actions in advance, and that this consideration is present.

To some extent the play in performance is a dramatisation of this act of premeditation inviting the scrutiny of the spectator. The spectator is encouraged to 'see', in its fullest sense, the images of memory at work in the present with the images of desire or anticipation that can lead to action in the future. When images interact within such a time frame, they do not merely make connections between ideas but make a progression of ideas, so that out of the repetition that underlies connection variation can arise.

Peter Brooks, although writing about plot in the novel and referring to the whole armoury of mnemonic devices that make for repetitions at every perceptual level, refers to the way repetitions inform the eye and the mind "to make connections...between different textual moments, to see past and present as related and as establishing a future that will be noticeable as some variation in the pattern".[158] At a thematic level in tragedy, the only surviving trilogy, the *Oresteia*, makes a useful example of repetition, connection and variation. Each play presents an insight into a possible future, and each play builds on the past of the previous play and revises its future. In the *Agamemnon* there is fear that the returning king will be killed, matched by "the increasingly futile hope that good will prevail";[159] in the *Khoephoroi* hope of Orestes' revenge gives way to fear at the continuing cycle of violence through the avenging spirit of the Erinyes; and in the *Eumenides* another pos-

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[157] *Conf.* 11.18.23 (translation by Sheed [1944]). See also Lakoff and Johnson (1999) 157.

[158] Brooks (1984) 99.

[159] Ewans (1995) xxx.

sibility for the future of the homicide (or in this case matricide) is explored through Athene's imposition of a court of law. The spectator is led through three possible solutions to reciprocal violence: hopelessness against the prevailing evil, revenge, or the institution of a means for legal redress which halts the cycle of violence. A three-fold repetition of the theme connects the individual plots of the individual plays into a larger plot. Further, the desire for meaning which drives the plot, both in the individual play and in the trilogy as a whole, can be seen as achieving not only dramatic resolution in the future time of the play, but of influencing the spectators' perceptions of the problem of reciprocal violence and its resolution in real future time beyond the microcosm of the theatre.

Although I have used a thematic example, that is not to say that 'theme' is what the spectators will remember most vividly. Rather, as Lebeck suggests, the connections between ideas about reciprocal violence in the *Oresteia* are "established by verbal repetition and a variety of related images".[160] The idea that image is also a powerful tool in engendering "variation in the pattern" and that it is finally in the "variation" that the meaning or point of the play may lie is the subject of this investigation. In the first place, then, we need to establish the nature of the images used in tragedy, whether they are of a kind to facilitate abstract thought. For this I return to the visual arts and look further at their relationship to tragedy.

Generic images

Herbert Golder proposes an inversion of the accepted relation between tragedy and the visual arts which sees tragic content and style reproduced or at least inspirational in vase painting particularly of the late fifth and the fourth centuries.[161] He claims on the contrary that "the esthetics of play-making may have evolved from those of sculpture and painting".[162] He points to the rich visual environment of Athens in the sixth and fifth centuries through its statuary and painted pottery and the "iconography of posture, gesture, and tableau" that such a culture afforded its dramatists.[163] This view tends to neglect a two-way

[160] Lebeck (1971) 80.
[161] Golder (1992) 323–60.
[162] Golder (1992) 323.
[163] Golder (1992) 324.

relationship between the visual arts and tragedy, and understates the importance of the gesture and movement of dance performance, ritual and everyday experience for both artist and dramatist.[164] Golder's argument also emphasises a static visual quality to tragedy at the expense of the activity of choral dance, the movements of the actors and the fluidity of language.[165] Nevertheless, Golder's argument is relevant to the sorts of images which are my special interest and which the poets themselves have privileged and featured, namely significant personal props.[166] I have already mentioned the place of works of art in the memory-bank of the spectators, but what Golder adds is an appreciation of the generic nature of the images of tragedy.

As I noted above,[167] the most pervasive example of the generic image in drama is that of the mask. This too may have its origins in the visual arts. Referring to Siegfried Melchinger's views Wiles writes that the mask "essentialised the face in the manner of sculptors like Phidias or Polygnotos",[168] and that "masking was concomitant with the idealising conventions of fifth-century art at large".[169] Although there were occasions for the exceptional mask as in the case of the bloodied eyes of Oidipous (S. *OT*) or the smiling, effeminate Dionysos (E. *Ba.*),[170] overall, the mask may have conveyed only generic distinctions such as gender, age, or occupation.[171] It is possible that the wig itself was sufficient to support these and other variables along with costume and text as Wiles suggests.[172] The mask or the stylized gesture was a most eco-

164 Golder (1992) 324 does list the arts which predated and had some influence on the development of tragedy: "mime, civic and religious ritual, choral poetry and dance, the metrical and musical forms of archaic lyric, Homer and the epic cycle, and doubtless 'something to do with satyrs' as well". He does not develop these influences, however, in his subsequent discussion of the "plastic and pictorial".

165 My thanks to John Davidson for raising these points with me.

166 Taplin (1977) 38 draws a distinction between larger props which are among the "'passive' aspects of staging" and "personal" props which are "active" and "often at the very centre of dramatic attention".

167 Section I, *The tragic mask.*

168 Wiles (2007) 8.

169 Wiles (2007) 66.

170 Taplin (1977) 34–5; cf. Dingel (1971) 351, Marshall (1999) 192, 196 on the use of second masks and the case of Dionysos. Contrast Wiles (2007) 221–31.

171 Rehm (1992) 41. Cf. Jones (1962) 45, Marshall (1999) 190–5.

172 Wiles (2007) 66. The cropped hair of a mourning Helen in Euripides *Helen* is one example of a wig used to convey emotion. Her scored cheeks, on the other hand, may be achieved by textual reference and dramatic gesture or by a second mask as Marshall (1999) 192 proposes.

nomical tool in conveying meaning to a vast number of spectators,[173] and a tool whose familiarity to the spectators could readily evoke a chain of associations for the dramatist to manipulate.[174]

A similar economy characterises the scene in Greek art or the tableau in drama. An image is selected for its power to communicate an episode in its own right; the part represents the whole,[175] or a typical image can represent a universal.[176] Thus, as Lebeck notes, when Agamemnon steps upon the tapestry "he is a visual illustration of the man who tramples what is sacred".[177] Writing on the relationship of the visual image to thought, Arnheim reflects on just such an economy in art: "The reduction of a human figure to the simple geometry of an expressive gesture or posture can sharpen the image"; and of the effect of this economy of representation on thought: "This quality is invaluable for abstract thought in that it offers the possibility of reducing a theme visually to a skeleton of essential dynamic elements".[178]

Both Golder and Arnheim are concerned with generic images and their power to transmit meaning.[179] An image may be concrete, but in its capacity to evoke a class of things or a generality rather than an individual case it can facilitate abstract thought.[180] Again we are reminded of the *mimesis* of art and tragedy which Aristotle relates to learning (*Poetics* 4) and to the apprehension of universals (*Poetics* 9). At the same time, we need to remember that the *mimesis* of tragic action is created by the poet not only out of image, but also (and for many, primarily) out of word. I now turn to the work of cognitive

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173 Pickard-Cambridge (1946) 141 suggests that there was seating for between 14,000 and 17,000 people in the theatre. At note 2 he qualifies Plato's much higher figure of 30,000 quoted in the *Symposion* (175e) as possible in the fifth century when there was also standing room on the embankments.

174 Golder (1992) 325.

175 Golder (1992) 325–6. See also Robertson and Frantz (1975) 11, where Robertson comments on a preference in classical art for an "indirect approach to narrative, the choice of a moment before or after the climactic one". Cf. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) 36–7.

176 Golder (1992) 328.

177 Lebeck (1971) 76. Taplin (1978) 80 also identifies the generalising nature of this scene, although he limits its effect to the action of the play: "This destructive action typifies the way that the royal house harms itself, above all by kindred murder".

178 Arnheim (1966) 71.

179 See the comments of Lindauer (1983) 472 on Arnheim.

180 Arnheim (1966) 71. Cohen (1976) 513–23 argues that imagery is particularly suited to abstract thinking in spatial relations (522); Arnheim also associates imagery with such abstract qualities as "modesty or gravity or pride" (71).

psychologists on the relationship of word and image to memory and thinking. Again I use the urn in Sophokles' *Elektra* as my main example. We recall that it is the proposed cognitive role of mental imagery for problem solving in situations of novelty and cognitive conflict which may be particularly applicable to the images of tragedy.

III *Cognitive psychology and the role of imagery in problem solving*

The discussion that follows does not attempt to review the research into the role of mental imagery in problem solving.[181] Nor does it give an account of the nature of imagery.[182] Rather, it seeks to outline aspects of imagery which may be useful in understanding better the cognitive function of the mental images and the visual perception of certain props in tragedy. Such aspects include the interrelation of word and image, theories about the role of imagery in memory and thinking, static and dynamic images, the situations in which imagery may enhance problem solving, and the comparative and anticipatory functions of images. This last aspect leads back to metaphor where the comparative function of images will be rephrased as 'correspondence' and their anticipatory function as 'reconceptualisation'.

Image and word

In a series of articles which he wrote in the 1920s Bartlett comments on the different characteristics of image and word and their relevance to thinking.[183] The strength of the image, he suggests, lies in its capacity to individualise or concretise and to combine creatively with other images.[184] In contrast, words impose order on information by sequencing and by the analysis of relations.[185] Both functions, of image and word, are needed for thinking, which Bartlett defines as "a reference

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[181] For such a review see Richardson (1983) 197–226 and (1999) *passim.*

[182] See in particular Kosslyn (1980, 1981, 1983, 1994).

[183] Bartlett (1921) 320–37, (1925) 16–28, (1927) 23–9.

[184] Bartlett (1927) 23–9 at 27. As Bartlett writes: "By the aid of the [visual] image . . . a man can take out of its setting something that happened a year ago, reinstate it with much if not all of its individuality unimpaired, compare, condense and combine it with something that happened yesterday and use them both to help him to solve a problem with which he is confronted today" (27).

[185] Bartlett (1921) 320–37 at 336, and for discussion of relevant experiments, 326.

to a past situation in such a way as to attempt to solve a present problem".[186]

More recent imagery debate has divided between two major theories. In a symbolist theory of problem solving, image and word are the "token particulars" or symbols that mediate cognition.[187] Allan Paivio has formulated this position as the dual-coding theory. His assumption is "that cognition consists largely of the activity of two partly interconnected but functionally independent and distinct symbolic systems".[188] Opposed to this position is the conceptualist or common coding theory, which attaches thinking to "abstract propositional representations".[189] A modification of these positions (though one that is nearer to Paivio's) is proposed by Kaufmann. His position is of particular interest to us because it appears adaptable to the situation of tragedy. He proposes that "the mental act, its symbolic expression and appropriate situational context should be seen as internally related, and forming an organic unity".[190] Applied to tragedy his position combines the mental act of thinking, the symbolic expression of image and word, and the situational context of the *mimesis* of tragic action.

The internal relationship of thinking to symbolic expressions leads Kaufmann to consider the functionality of word and image in problem solving situations entailing novelty.[191] There are two major dimensions to such problem solving: the *level* of processing entailed and the *type* of processing. Problem solving occurs over a spectrum of *levels* of processing which relate to the familiarity of the task at hand.[192] At one end is the *reproductive level* where a task is familiar and can be solved by routine procedures. At the other end is the *productive level* where a task is unfamiliar or novel and its solution is not to be found by the application of set rules and principles.[193] Against *levels* of processing Kaufmann plots *types* of processing of information that are needed for the solving of problems. These *types* range from *sequential* processing

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186 Bartlett (1927) 24.

187 Kaufmann (1985) 53.

188 Paivio (1983b) 308.

189 Richardson (1983) 204. See also Richardson's discussion of these two positions with relevant bibliography on pages 202–7. Cf. Kaufmann (1996) 77–95. For a more recent review of the debate from a proponent of the conceptualist theory see Pylyshyn (2002) 157–82 and peer commentary 182–216.

190 Kaufmann (1985) 55.

191 Kaufmann (1985) 56.

192 Cf. Antonietti (1999) 408–9.

193 Kaufmann (1985) 56–8.

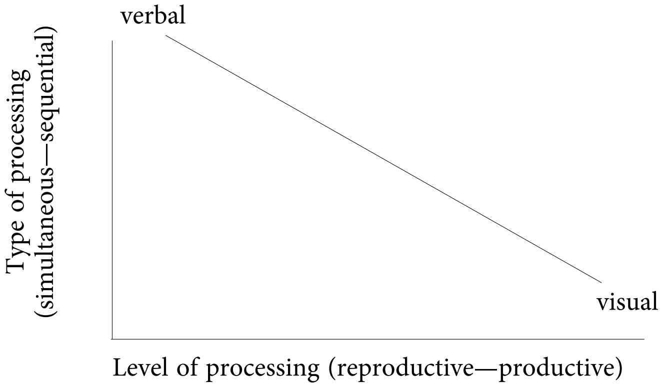

Fig. 1 Schematic model showing the postulated functional significance of verbal and visual representation in relation to level and type of processing

to *simultaneous/synchronous* processing.[194] Kaufmann applies Paivio's theories, which associate *sequential* processing with the verbal system and *simultaneous/synchronous* processing with the imagery system,[195] to build up a model which proposes the relative significance of the verbal and imagery systems in the solving of different kinds of problems. The results of Kaufmann's investigation are represented in Figure 1 above.[196] In the labelling of the figure, "visual representation" refers to mental imagery, although Kaufmann notes that mental imagery and visual perception share many of the same features.[197]

Kaufmann concludes that where the solution of a problem entails *reproductive, sequential* processing the verbal system is more efficient but where a solution entails *productive, simultaneous* processing the visual system should prevail. This finding supports his thesis that "task novelty is a major determinant of the functional use of imagery in problem solving".[198] I shall return to the implications of these suggestions for our understanding of the function of imagery in tragedy below under the sub-heading, Novelty and conflict. But first I turn to the work of Paivio on the relations of image, word, and memory.

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194 Kaufmann (1985) 56–8.

195 Paivio (1983b) 309. Cf. Kaufmann (1985) 57–8.

196 Reproduced from Kaufmann (1985) 63 Figure 1.

197 Kaufmann (1985) 57; See also Paivio (1971) 87–9; Finke (1986) 76–83; Rubin (1995) 41–6.

198 Kaufmann (1985) 62. Cf. Kaufmann and Helstrup (1993) 123–6; Kaufmann (1996) 110. Also, Morris and Hampson (1983) 228–36.

Image, word and memory

Paivio's work has an ancient antecedent in the ideas of Simonides (*c.* 556 to 468 BC).[199] Not only did Simonides invent the "art of memory" but Ploutarkhos attributes to him the saying that "painting is poetry that is silent and poetry is painting that speaks",[200] a comparison of the verbal and visual arts that is a precursor to Aristotle's theory of *mimesis*.[201] Simonides' 'invention' found a major application in the teaching of rhetoric, where images facilitated a memory of things and also of words.[202] In modern cognitive psychology, image and word represent two distinct symbolic systems. The imagery system is processed by the right side of the brain, the verbal system is processed by the left, the imagery system is analog, the verbal system is digital.[203] But in line with ancient connections between image, word and memory, Paivio proposes the interconnectedness of the two symbolic systems particularly in memory functions. His experiments show that "pictures, concrete words, and abstract words form a decreasing series in terms of the directness or ease with which they evoke mental images of concrete objects and events".[204] Like Kaufmann, he assumes that mental imagery and visual perception share many of the same features.[205] Further, he proposes that pictures and high imagery words are easiest for the mind to recall, and that such pictures and words act as cues or "conceptual pegs" for the recall of associated imagery material.[206] This imagery information is organised *simultaneously* in contrast to

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199 On Simonides see Yates (1966) 1–49 at 27. Cf. Paivio (1983a) 2, and Speidel and Troy (1985) 14–17.

200 Plou. *Mor.* 346F: ὁ Σιμωνίδης τὴν μὲν ζωγραφίαν ποίησιν σιωπῶσαν προσαγορεύει, τὴν δὲ ποίησιν ζωγραφίαν λαλοῦσαν. Cf. Yates (1966) 28.

201 See Ford (2002) ch. 4 for an interpretation of Simonides' comparison in the light of "a change in the relations between song and writing in Simonides' time" (96).

202 Yates (1966) 2–9.

203 Paivio (1983b) 322–3. Cohen (1976) 519–22. For a refinement of the right/left hemisphere function of the brain see Richardson (1999) *passim*, and his conclusion on page 142: "Structures within the posterior portion of the left hemisphere of the brain appear to be crucial to the *generation* and the *experience* of imagery. Structures in the right hemisphere appear to be involved in the *transformation* and the *manipulation* of mental images". My italics.

204 Paivio (1983a) 6.

205 Paivio (1971) 87–9; Kaufmann (1985) 57; Finke (1986) 76–83.

206 Paivio (1983a) 7; for "conceptual pegs" see pages 10–11. On concreteness effects on recall and memory see also Paivio, Walsh and Bons (1994) 1196–1204, and Paivio, Khan and Begg (2000) 149–59. Sadoski, Goetz and Rodriguez (2000) 85–95 link concreteness in texts to their "comprehensibility, interest and recall" (85).

the *sequential* organisation of verbal information.[207] Such synchronous storage of information, which characterises an analog system of thought, is particularly efficient and economical. One image can evoke simultaneously a whole complex of information: multiple meanings, emotions, logical non sequiturs.[208] Although Paivio's experimental work is directed to the function of imagery in memory, his studies lead naturally to the role of memory in thinking since this "involves the active manipulation and use of memory information".[209] He relates the function of imagery in thinking to the symbolic qualities of images and to their capacity for transformation.[210] Word and image "co-operate" in problem solving, and, more particularly, the "associative leaps" of the imagination which can lead to creative thinking can be more effectively realised when channelled through the logical sequencing of language.[211] Paivio's comments are suggestive of the innovative capacity of imagery in thinking, although how this might function is not clear. Where his work can be most usefully applied to the role of imagery in tragedy is through the memory and learning functions of imagery expressed by his concepts of "associative retrieval" and "conceptual pegs".[212]

The image of the funeral urn in Sophokles' *Elektra* is just such a conceptual peg. It can summon up in the memory of the spectators associations with death and burial. Acting as a cue for retrieving associated ideas in a general concept, the image of the urn has a symbolic quality; although the urn embodies one particular concrete image it puts the spectators in mind of abstract and universal 'death'. As the play progresses, however, the urn takes on other associations which make it a symbol of revenge. Out of a universal symbol Sophokles creates an "idiosyncratic" one.[213] This image serves the dramatist's own ends; it works with the plot in organising meaning, and it conveys in a memorable, familiar image not only the abstract concept of revenge

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[207] Paivio (1983a) 8–10. Evidence, on the other hand, also for the sequential organisation of imagery information is suggested by Green and Brock (2002) 337 when they discuss a particularly powerful story image as a cue to events preceding and succeeding it.

[208] Klinger (1978) 191–205 at 202.

[209] Paivio (1983a) 6.

[210] Paivio (1983a) 11–16

[211] Paivio (1983a) 17.

[212] Cf. Paivio (1972) 252–79.

[213] Paivio (1983a) 13.

but the reasons and desires that both generate and are generated by revenge. The question arises as to why Sophokles chose this image and whether it would remain a cue to evoke the associations of revenge for the spectator beyond the performance, or even to stimulate an alteration of mind or a reconceptualisation of a problem which could influence its solution. Our example is thus straining beyond the mnemonic functions of image outlined by Paivio towards a new level of cueing and understanding.

Image, word and thinking

Such a flexible image is no longer just a valuable tool to memory and learning; such an image has a role in thinking. Tore Helstrup differentiates between these functions: "In learning and memory[,] imagery operations are used both in encoding and retrieval of information. In thinking and problem solving, imagery operations are used to transform information to a more suitable format".[214] Helstrup is writing of mental images, whereas in considering tragic props we are dealing with images that are both mental and visually perceived, so that 'transformations' occur at both a figurative and a literal level.

Static and dynamic images

At a literal level a prop may represent the static function of imagery, whereas figuratively, as "the symbolic representation…of transformations" it conforms to Paivio and Clark's definition of the dynamic functions of imagery.[215] Elektra's urn, for example, may be seen as a static image, yet in its changing symbolism the image is dynamic. Euripides' *Helen* pushes the static/dynamic dualism to an extreme in the creation of two Helens, an *eidolon* and a real woman, a static image and a dynamic image, or is it the other way round? An *eidolon* which can convince two armies to fight over it for ten years is no more a static image than a real woman who spends her days clinging to a tomb is a dynamic image. It is not surprising in such an inventive play

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[214] Helstrup (1988a) 241–50 at 243. Cf. Helstrup (1988b) 65–84.

[215] Paivio and Clark (1991) 224. At p. 225 Paivio and Clark list examples of dynamic and static images which range from pictures denoting movement, "such as a running mouse" compared with pictures denoting something stationary "such as a sitting mouse" to more sophisticated examples applicable to our images in tragedy. These examples include "interactive images" and "transformation of figural information". Cf. Paivio (1971) 28–33.

also to find a prop which is itself literally transformed, as when the mask representing the beautiful Helen is 'transformed' into the ugly mask of the mourning Helen. In the discussion of the props below we shall see the dynamic function of both their visually perceived and mental images in the transformations activated by the poets. Given the presumed male dominance in the composition of the audience of Greek tragedy,[216] Paivio and Clark's observation of gender differences in response to static and dynamic images is an interesting extra point. Males, they found, tended to respond more positively to dynamic imagery, females to static imagery.[217]

Although I argue that the props in chapters one to three below function dynamically whether they are perceived or imagined, experiments by Alessandro Antonietti—[218] in which 'static' is fixed to pictorial representation and 'dynamic' to mental imagery—[219] are useful nonetheless in suggesting the way imagery facilitates thinking and problem solving.[220] He concludes that by mental visualisation one may avoid an erroneous mechanical response to a problem that is formulated verbally or pictorially;[221] that mental images invite unusual manipulations of a problem; that pictures may be most successful where the solving of a problem requires a number of steps considered simultaneously;[222]

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[216] On the composition of the audience see note below in ch. 2, προεωρακώς, *Public and private funerals*.

[217] Paivio and Clark (1991) 226. Cf. Harshman and Paivio (1987) 287, and Richardson (1999) 107.

[218] Antonietti (1991) 211–27.

[219] Antonietti (1991) 216 describes a picture as a "'frozen' representation". Mental imagery, on the other hand, Antonietti describes as a "kinetic representation".

[220] Antonietti (1991) 213–6 provides an example of the flexibility of mental imagery over verbal instructions or pictorial representation in a problem which he sets for three groups of 13–14 year old children. The problem is stated as follows: "'A rope ladder was hanging from a boat so that the ladder had six rungs above the sea. The distance between any two rungs was 30 cm. At high tide, the sea level rose 70 cm. How many rungs were above the sea at high tide?'" (213). One group was given the problem verbally, another group was given a drawing of a boat with a ladder with six rungs above the sea, and the third group were asked to mentally visualise the situation. It was this last group who were most successful in realising that as the tide lifted the boat the number of rungs above the water did not change.

[221] In the rope ladder experiment above we also have an example of mental imagery overcoming the biases of a mechanical response.

[222] For this experiment Antonietti (1991) 219–221 set the following problem: "'In a drawer you have five white socks and five black socks. In the dark, what is the smallest number of single socks which you would have to take out to be sure of getting a matching pair?'" (219). As in the experiment above he used three groups of 13–14 year olds. Again the first group were given the problem verbally, the second group

and that mental imagery is 'dynamic' in encouraging a restructuring of a problem.[223] His results further emphasise the heuristic function of images, both mental and visually perceived.

The capacity for images to transform and restructure a problem also implies a function not only in *simultaneous/synchronous* processing but in the *sequential* processing more usually associated with the verbal system.[224] In a *sequential* system there is an "interdependence" between "successive steps" in the solving of a problem.[225] Writing from observations on learning in the class-room, Kabanova-Meller makes a similar point.[226] "The first image... plays a dual role in solving the problem. It helps one to remember... and serves as a base from which to proceed to the next stage of solution of the problem. A new second image is created each time (on the basis of new variants)".[227] An example of conversion of a series of images into a sequence is found in the shield scene of Aiskhylos' *Seven Against Thebes* discussed below at chapter one. In that scene Eteokles faces and solves a series of problems by responding each time to the visual cues given by the enemy shield. At the same time an "interdependence" or sequencing between the images emerges which leads inexorably to the more universal problem of *stasis* or brother against brother. In this problem the spectators too are involved.

were given a picture showing two rows of socks, five black socks in one row and five white socks in the other, and the mental imagery group were told to imagine the socks laid out in the drawer. In this experiment it was the picture group who were most successful in producing the correct answer of three socks.

223 Antonietti (1991) 221–3 here adapts the square and rhombus problem from Plato's *Meno* 84d–85b. The problem that he sets for his students (aged 16–20 years) involves determining "the ratio between the area of a square and the area of the rhombus inscribed in the square" (221). To one group of students the problem is formulated verbally, and a second group are instructed to solve the problem by mentally visualising the figures and transforming them spatially. "Intuitive solvers" (that is, those who, like the slave in *Meno*, did not use geometrical formulae) in the mental visualiser group were most successful in reaching the solution that "the area of the square is double the area of the rhombus" (222).

224 See Rumelhart and Norman (1988) 558–61 where they argue for sequential processing in analogical (or image) representations. This is in line with the distinction which they believe is "overstated" between analogical and propositional (or symbol as in the verbal system) representations (558).

225 See Paivio (1971) 34 and his revision in Paivio and Clark (1991) 238–9.

226 Kabanova-Meller (1971) 346–60.

227 Kabanova-Meller (1971) 350.

The tragic play and the real world

Problem solving in tragedy can be seen as functioning both internally, in the tragic action of a play, and externally, in the lived actions of the spectators. Kaufmann defines a problem as "a discrepancy between the existing situation and a desired state of affairs".[228] For the characters of the play the problem is 'present'; whereas for the spectators, the problem is 'hypothetical'. The plot of Sophokles' *Elektra* is a study in the 'present' of how Elektra and Orestes seek to avenge the death of their father Agamemnon. They must overcome the "discrepancy" between their powerlessness against their father's murderers and their desire to kill the felons Klytaimnestra and Aigisthos. The creative solution to the problem is the urn, that image, which, in the spurious associations it brings to Klytaimnestra, deceives her, throws her off guard, and facilitates her children's revenge. At a more abstract level, however, the urn becomes an image around which a 'hypothetical' problem revolves, this time for the spectators.[229] The "existing situation" is the revenge mentality and the problem it highlights is the capacity of revenge to corrupt the innocent. The urn here may function not merely as a cue to its associations with death, deceit, and revenge but as an image to transform and restructure these associations for the spectators.

What the spectators are processing and what is mediated for them through the image of the urn is a type of simulation of their own world in the world of the play.[230] In the language of cognitive psychology,[231] the play can be seen as a "representation" or a "mapping" which "mirrors some aspects" of the real fifth-century world—in the case of Sophokles' *Elektra*, revenge and its ramifications. Revenge as a possible real life mapping is an obvious outcome of a major theme of the play. A detailed discussion of revenge in Athens around the period of the production of Sophokles' *Elektra*,[232] however, goes beyond the

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[228] Kaufmann (1988) 231–40 at 231.

[229] Rubin (1995) 46 considers the function of images in hypothetical situations "as ways of testing in the mind what would happen if something were done in the external world". For the spectators of Sophokles' *Elektra*, the play as a whole is the perception of a hypothetical situation, but the funerary urn, which is a significant object both within the play and within their "external world", provides a most economical image through which to test the hypothetical against the real.

[230] For the use of mental simulation in hypothesising see Rumelhart and Norman (1988) 556–7. Cf. Rumelhart (1989) 306–7.

[231] See Rumelhart and Norman (1988) 513.

[232] See March (2001) 20–22 for discussion of the date of Sophokles' *Elektra*. March believes that most critics would date the play within ten years before the production of *Philoktetes* in 409 BC (21).

scope of this study which is proposing a significance to the imagery of certain tragic props in thinking and problem solving. In cognitive terms the analogies between the two worlds invite comparisons (in which the spectators can make sure judgements) and anticipations (in which the events of the play may form for the spectators a basis for hypothesising about events in the real world).[233]

Comparison and anticipation

Kaufmann identifies "comparison" and "anticipation" as the main cognitive tasks of imagery.[234] Although he classifies these as "simpler cognitive operations" he also includes under "anticipation" the sort of complex symbolic imagery processes used by Einstein in the development of his theory of relativity.[235] Einstein "imagined himself riding alongside of a lightbeam exploring what he would see compared to a stationary observer".[236] This experience gave Einstein the opportunity to fuse two perspectives or images, that of a moving train by the stationary observer on the railway platform, and that of the platform by the stationary observer on the moving train.

Kaufmann proposes a theory which translates a problem from a verbal (propositional) system to an image (analog) system.[237] He relates the deductive operations of the verbal system to perceptual comparisons and inductive operations to perceptual anticipations. The transformations of *reproductive* processing are translated into the simulations of *productive* processing.[238] Finally, the status that he assigns to imagery in problem solving is that of the "mental model", that is, an abstract image that has a "visuo-spatial structure".[239] His theory is represented in Figure 2 below.[240]

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233 For this understanding of comparisons and anticipations in "imagery based representations", see Kaufmann (1988) 234.

234 Kaufmann (1996) 111. Cf. Kaufmann (1988) 233–4.

235 Kaufmann and Helstrup (1993) 144.

236 Kaufmann (1988) 234. For this and other examples of the place of mental imagery in reasoning and insight, see Shepard (1978) 125–7.

237 Kaufmann (1988) 231.

238 For *reproductive* and *productive* levels of processing see Figure 1 and discussion above in this section, *Image and word*.

239 Kaufmann (1996) 109. On mental models see also Morris and Hampson (1983) 141. A famous example of the capacity of the mind to imagine spatial operations are the experiments of Cooper and Shepard (1984) 114–20 which confirmed that the mental rotation of an object mirrored its external rotation in the physical world. See also Shepard (1978) 134–6 and Rumelhart (1989) 306–7.

240 Reproduced from Kaufmann (1988) 233 Table 1. Cf. Kaufmann and Helstrup (1993) 124, Kaufmann (1990) 173, Kaufmann (1996) 111.

CONSCIOUS REPRESENTATIONS	VERBAL		IMAGINAL	
Mode of operation	Computational Transformations (Rule-governed Inferences)		Perceptual Simulations (Mental modelling)	
Main information processing categories	Deductive reasoning	Inductive reasoning	Perceptual comparisons	Perceptual anticipations
UNDERLYING REPRESENTATIONS	PROPOSITIONAL		ANALOG	

Fig. 2 Kaufmann's theory of symbolic representations in problem solving

It remains, then, to decide on the kind of situation in which this translation from a verbal system to an image system is most appropriate. We return to Kaufmann's proposal mentioned above that novelty is a major stimulus for using imagery in problem solving, and associated with the solving of novel problems is cognitive conflict.

Novelty and conflict

The novel situation or problem, as mentioned at the beginning of this Introduction, is what Vernant calls "la perspective propre à la tragédie: l'homme et son action se profilant... non comme des réalités stables qu'on pourrait cerner, définir et juger, mais comme des problèmes, des questions sans réponse, des énigmes dont les doubles sens restent sans cesse à déchiffrer".[241] Tragedy appears to present just the kind of situation—novel, complex and ambiguous—in which imagery operations may take over from verbal, where comparisons may do the work of deductive reasoning, and anticipations the work of inductive reasoning.[242] Novelty implies that there is no procedure established for the solution of a problem, so that the "cognitive conflict" entailed may be resolved by a conceptual change of mind.[243] Kaufmann locates the use of imagery principally in the "initial phase" of the solving of a problem; after that, once the problem has become more familiar, he proposes that the verbal system will take precedence.[244]

[241] Vernant (1986) 22. Cf. Vernant (1988a) 242.

[242] Kaufmann (1996) 111.

[243] Kaufmann (1988) 235. See also Kaufmann (1979) 30–32.

[244] Kaufmann (1988) 235–6. Rumelhart (1989) 300 proposes similar reasoning processes to those of Kaufmann in novel situations. Rumelhart similarly lists three: "reasoning by similarity" which parallels Kaufmann's "perceptual comparisons", "rea-

Kaufmann's theory is close to Paivio's dual-coding theory but with a contrast in emphasis possibly arising from Paivio's focus on memory and Kaufmann's on thinking.[245] As opposed to Paivio's emphasis on imagery and the concrete, Kaufmann's theory for images applies to problems that are concrete or abstract. Imagery effects fall into two categories: images that are "available" for conveying concrete information, and images that are "useful" in conveying abstract information.[246] Tragic props seem particularly suitable for providing both concrete and abstract effects.[247] Paivio also gives word and image equal importance in memory processing whereas Kaufmann argues that the linguistic system is "superordinate", and that imagery is "ancillary", "nested into language".[248] Nevertheless, Kaufmann's findings from experiments, which ranged from simple memory tasks to concept formation to problem solving and creative thinking, indicate that imagery may be increasingly important the more complex the task.[249]

To some extent we see Kaufmann's theory of problem solving—which initially uses the perceptual comparison and anticipation of the image system followed by the verbal/propositional system—at work in Orestes' approach to the murder of his mother (S. *El.*). Orestes has been groomed by his Paidagogos to walk in the shoes of his father, general in Troy, ruler in Mykenai (1–10), and to avenge his father. He uses metaphors from horse training and military leadership (23–8). These are images which provide him with perceptual comparisons as a first step in reasoning toward his goal. Can he apply past, familiar

soning by mental simulation" which parallels Kaufmann's "perceptual anticipations", and "formal reasoning" which parallels Kaufmann's return to the verbal/propositional system after the "initial phase" of solving a novel problem. Rumelhart does not, however, incorporate the emotional—"conflict"—into his scheme. Plato, in Pender's (2003) 55–81 discussion, also shares something of Kaufmann's position on the relation of image and word in thinking. Pender writes that Plato's "*eikones and paradeigmata* were for him at best heuristic devices, able to help the thinker to gain knowledge if used in the correct way—namely, in conjunction with other forms of argument and dialectical testing" (80).

245 Kaufmann (1996) 109–110.

246 Kaufmann (1988) 232.

247 On the generic nature of tragic images and their use in abstract thinking see above in section II, *Generic images*. Helstrup, Cornoldi and de Beni (1997) 189–97 identify "personal" and "general" images as the two types that "integrate with one another" most easily, and personal images as most memorable (189). Personal images relate to concrete information, general images to abstract information.

248 Kaufmann (1996) 77–118 at 108–9.

249 Kaufmann (1996) 112.

patterns to solve his current problem? He discovers that the problem of how to take vengeance is not to be solved by using methods which would seem appropriate to him—the spear, the shield and an army (36)—but rather, on the oracular advice of Phoibos (35), he must achieve his ends by craft (37). This solution entails some perceptual anticipation, a deceit that involves the concrete image of the urn conveying the concrete information that he is dead. The urn is both an "available" and an appropriate image and one that is also "useful" in conveying to the spectators the abstract information of the deceit that Orestes is putting in place. Such information is transmitted at first through the mental image of the urn, but then, as the urn's function in revenge becomes more imminent, through the visually perceived prop. Orestes' problem as to how to murder his mother is novel, complex and ambiguous, and its solution causes him some mental conflict, reflected both in his need to seek advice, and his need to come to terms with his death "in word" (59–60). For Orestes, the conflict is quickly resolved by resorting to obscure precedent (61–6). He changes the metaphors that govern his thinking from the honourable, (ἵππος εὐγενής, 25, "noble horse"), to the expedient, (οὐδὲν ῥῆμα σὺν κέρδει κακόν, 61, "no word is base when spoken with profit"),[250] that is to say, the end justifies the means. This process of change in thinking is described by Lakoff and Johnson: "If a new metaphor enters the conceptual system that we base our actions on, it will alter that conceptual system and the perceptions and actions that the system gives rise to".[251] Furthermore, once Orestes has solved the initial phase of his problem (of how to deceive Klytaimnestra) by instituting the image of the urn, the remainder of the deception is achieved through the language of the Paidagogos' report of Orestes' death, that is, through the verbal system.[252]

The Orestes example, embedded in the action of the play, is a model of what may be happening between dramatist and spectators. The problem of revenge is given a concrete representation by the very performance of the drama and this representation is economised and made retrievable by the image of the urn. The dramatist thus provides an image and a setting through which the spectators can view the problem vicariously. The urn is an image which connects with the specta-

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250 Translation by Grene (1957).
251 Lakoff and Johnson (1980) 145.
252 Kaufmann (1988) 237.

tors' past associations and invites a perceptual comparison between what a funerary urn symbolises in real life (namely death) and the purposes to which the image is being put in the play. As the urn accrues its further dramatic symbolism of deceit and revenge the spectators are drawn into perceptual anticipation in the form of hypothesis. The dramatisation itself, cued by the image of the urn, offers a simulation of successful revenge through which Athenians can hypothesise about the effectiveness of revenge as a solution. The dramatisation, then, may change the perspectives from which to view revenge and may make an old problem new. Further, if the manipulation of the urn image in the play were to prompt a change in thinking in the spectators, it would, nevertheless, be in the future, and in language, that the ramifications of the new metaphor or concept would be worked out.[253] The idea that spectators may process imagery information through comparison and anticipation will be looked at more closely in my subsequent discussion of the plays.[254] Attention to the processing of imagery leads us to consider how images may work together to make meaning. Ideas of comparison between images draw us back to metaphor and to Aristotle's definition that this thing is that thing (τοῦτο ἐκεῖνο). This is not to say that a classical theory of metaphor is sufficient for our purposes or does justice to theories about image and word already put forward. The classical view places metaphor within the context of language, whereas my discussion is more consistent with contemporary theory which places metaphor in thought.[255] In this theory, metaphor is not limited to its use in poetic expression but is shown to be all pervasive in our everyday language.[256] The tragic props in this study

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[253] In her discussion of imagery in the *Oresteia*, Lebeck (1971) 59–91 at 80–1 points to the metamorphosed image of "the endless flow of blood" which is visually perceived in the tapestries in the *Agamemnon*, the bloodied robe in the *Khoephoroi* and the crimson robes for the converted and newly named Furies in the *Eumenides*. This is an image which the spectators may carry beyond the theatre as a cue to the damage and resolution of revenge and civil strife. But once conceptual change has been made, the details may be worked out verbally, as Athene does at the end of the *Eumenides*.

[254] These "simpler cognitive operations" conform with the view noted by McConachie (2001) 583 n. 46 that "audience members will process new information in the theatre only if it contributes to their understanding of the dramatic/theatrical context and if the processing effort is small".

[255] For three fine essays on contemporary theory see those by Schön (ch. 9), Reddy (ch. 10), and Lakoff (ch. 11) in Ortony (1993). See also Lakoff and Johnson (1999) 122–7 "Why the Traditional Theory Fails".

[256] Cf. Helstrup (1988b) 66: "Metaphoric expressions probably represent a basic and natural way of using language"; or Verbrugge and McCarrell (1977) 495: "Metaphoric language is endemic to ordinary communication".

are precious but also 'everyday' images in the mind of the fifth century Athenian spectator. They are both "available" and "useful" in conveying information and, as image metaphors, offer a means for realising the comparative and anticipatory functions of images in situations of novelty and cognitive conflict. Discussion below of conceptual metaphor provides a vocabulary for approaching the kind of mappings that we meet in metaphor. Other topics considered here, the comprehension of metaphor and multiple meanings in image shape, relate more directly to the cognitive experience of the spectators as they watch and make meaning from the changing metaphors of the props.

Metaphor: concrete and abstract

Conceptual metaphor

Lakoff characterises metaphor by the phrase "cross-domain mappings" which may be concept or image based.[257] His adoption of the term "mappings" links the elements of metaphor in a relationship of correspondence rather than of comparison. In his paradigm metaphor, "Love is a journey", "love" is the target domain (otherwise known as the "topic" or "tenor") and "journey" is the source domain (otherwise known as the "vehicle").[258] The correspondence between them is built on the underlying schema of "source-path-goal" within the journey domain. What target and source have in common (the "ground") are the systematic correspondences between entities in each domain. Thus lovers correspond with travellers, the lovers' relationship with the travellers' vehicle, the lovers' goals with the destination of the journey.[259] This view places metaphor within everyday experience and may help to explain why metaphor is so easily understood.[260] Whereas in conceptual metaphors a number of concepts in one domain correspond or map onto concepts in another domain, in image metaphors, the mapping is from one mental image onto another. We shall find that both types of metaphor function through the dramatic props in this study.

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257 Lakoff (1993) 203, 245.

258 Lakoff (1993) 206–7. The terms commonly used in discussing metaphor (vehicle, topic, ground) were introduced by Richards (1936) 89–138. Cf. Goatly (1997) 9.

259 Lakoff and Johnson (1999) 64. Cf. Gibbs (1994) 146–7.

260 Gibbs (1994) 263.

Image metaphor

In explaining image metaphors Lakoff uses the example of two mental images from a line in André Breton's poem *Free Union*: "'My wife…whose waist is an hourglass'".[261] Lakoff continues, "This is a superimposition [or mapping] of the image of an hourglass onto the image of a woman's waist by virtue of their common shape". In his section "Metaphor in Art", although not referring to image metaphors, Gibbs provides further examples drawn from film, painting and sculpture.[262] One example from a painting by Magritte refers to a fireplace made to resemble a railway tunnel.[263] The mapping here is clearly visually perceived rather than a superimposing of mental images. An example already referred to from Alfred Hitchcock's film *The Birds* has parallels with the type of image mappings we shall meet below in the discussion of the shield scene in Aiskhylos' *Seven Against Thebes*. One image in *The Birds*, of a canary caught and returned to its cage by a man, is mapped onto another of a woman 'caged' in a glass telephone booth by attacking sea-gulls. In this metaphor there is both a "common shape" to vehicle and topic, as well as the conceptual relationship of entrapment. Gibbs calls such metaphors "double metaphors" as they are composed of both "attributional" and "relational" mappings.[264] The topic is an inversion of the vehicle in much the same way as Eteokles' inverts the images on the shield-devices.

Blending

An extension of conceptual metaphor is found in Turner's interest in proverbs and parables as metaphors. In proverbs and parables "one story is projected onto another".[265] In the process of meaning being carried from one story to another there may originate "blended concepts" which may be realised in particularly vivid and incongrous

[261] Lakoff (1993) 229. Cf. Gibbs (1994) 259. In strong metaphors, as we shall see below in Verbrugge and McCarrell's (1977) 499 straw/tree trunk example, the kind of "structural resemblance" which exists in image metaphor is an important feature.

[262] Cf. Indurkha (1992) section 1.5.

[263] Gibbs (1994) 186.

[264] Gibbs (1994) 244–5.

[265] Turner (1996) 3–11 at 5. I quote one of Turner's examples of a proverb (source domain) which can be applied to a variety of target domains: "'When the cat's away, the mice will play,' said at the office, can be projected onto a story of boss and workers. Said in the classroom, it can be projected onto a story of teacher and students. Said of sexual relationships, it can be projected onto a story of infidelity" (6).

imagery.[266] Turner gives the example of Bertran de Born from Dante's *Inferno*, where the divisiveness Bertran instigated in life has the analog in death of his head being separate from his body.[267] Physical division in the source domain is mapped onto divisiveness in the target domain. Between these two, but not found in either, is the blended concept of Bertran receiving his fitting retribution.[268] Tragedy may also be seen as a mapping between two stories, between a dramatic narrative and a mythical narrative, with conceptual blends which invite the spectators to make inferences in the real world. With his startling image of the headless Bertran in the source domain Turner also highlights the importance of the vehicle in the comprehending of metaphor.

Comprehension of metaphor

Comprehension of metaphor is central to the relation of dramatist and spectator, and to the making of meaning. And "successful handling of metaphors," Helstrup suggests, "depends to a large extent on willingness to take a visual attitude".[269] This "visual attitude" in tragedy is facilitated by, among other things, the tragedians' use of props. Helstrup provides us with a model for the processing of conceptual metaphors,[270] which identifies the conditions which may be most conducive to comprehending a metaphor. His model, reproduced at Figure 3,[271] may be useful to our understanding of the image of the urn as the vehicle of a metaphor.

Helstrup proposes that to comprehend a metaphor is to resolve the "tension between literal and non-literal interpretations".[272] His model shows a number of levels at which the literal/non-literal tension in

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[266] Turner (1996) 57–84. Cf. Turner (2002) 9–20.

[267] Turner (1996) 61–4.

[268] Turner (1996) 63. Cf. Turner's example at 98–9 of an illustration of a bicycle that accompanied a magazine article on the end of the cold war. What has to be argued in the article, "that the disappearance of Soviet political control should be bad for American policy" is immediately understood through the conceptual blending evident in the illustration. The front wheel of the bicycle is the United states, the back wheel, the Soviet Union. Since the back wheel has disappeared the bicycle is unusable. Cf. Turner and Fauconnier (1999) 407–8 "Visual Blends".

[269] Helstrup (1988b) 65–84 at 80.

[270] Helstrup (1988b) 81 Table 7. Cf. Helstrup (1995) 65–81.

[271] Reproduced from Helstrup (1988b) 81 Table 7.

[272] Helstrup (1988b) 81, cf. 66–7. Cf. Ortony (1979a) 161–80. On the conventional application of literal/non-literal terminology to metaphor see Johnson and Malgady (1979) 250. Gibbs (1994) 211 refers to this tension as the "literal incompatibility of the topic and vehicle".

Name level	Code level	Reference level
A. Sign	B1. Literal verbal	C1. Concrete
		C2. Abstract
	B2. Literal visual	C3. Concrete
		C4. Abstract
	B3. Non-literal verbal	C5. Concrete
		C6. Abstract
	B4. Non-literal visual	C7. Concrete
		C8. Abstract

Fig. 3 A code-level interpretation of the psychological nature of metaphors

figurative language may be partially or completely resolved. The "name level" refers to a sign which may be signified verbally (as a word) or visually (as a picture). The sign has a meaning which can be coded either literally or non-literally, and within these two categories, verbally or visually. Each meaning code can be instantiated concretely (usually with reference to a single instance or event) or abstractly (usually with reference to a class of events). The conditions which Helstrup suggests may facilitate a complete resolution is a correspondence/comparison between a literal visual sign with a concrete reference (B2–C3) and a non-literal verbal sign with an abstract reference (B3–C6).[273] He illustrates his model by using the sign (A), "mad dog", which may be represented by the letters of the word or by a picture. This sign functions at all levels for literal interpretations.[274] A non-literal interpretation for this sign is "politician", which also functions at all levels for non-literal interpretations.[275] If we then apply the optimal comparative/corresponding items (B2–C3 and B3–C6) our metaphoric expression reads: "a politician is a mad dog". "Politician" is the target/topic/tenor

[273] Helstrup (1988b) 82. See also the caution which seems to apply to this comparison in Helstrup (1995) 79, where he suggests that the concrete image may obstruct abstract interpretations.

[274] Helstrup (1988b) 81 explains: "The information signalized by the sign can be represented at the code level B1 simply as saying to oneself the words MAD DOG, thinking about the neighbour's dog (C1), or by thinking about angry and dangerous dogs in general (C2). Alternatively an image might be formed (B2). Images would then, dependent on the references, be classified as C3 or C4".

[275] Helstrup (1988b) 81: verbally (B3) or visually (B4) the non-literal interpretation of the sign "mad dog" may refer to "a specified statesman" (C5)/(C7) or to the general class of politicians (C6)/(C8).

domain, "mad dog" the source/vehicle domain, "politician" is abstract, "mad dog" concrete.

Support for the "critical role" of the vehicle "in the comprehension and recall of metaphoric topics" is provided by a series of experiments conducted by Verbrugge and McCarrell, who approach metaphoric language from the perspective of comprehension rather than creation.[276] It is the vehicle, they found, which guides the comprehender to the relation (or metaphoric resemblance) between vehicle and topic, and it is the vehicle which is the "source of constraints" necessary for the interpretation of the topic.[277] This is not to say that the topic is "passive"; rather there is an interaction between vehicle and topic so that the topic too "imposes constraints on the vehicle term".[278] In the paradigm metaphor used by Verbrugge and McCarrell, "Tree trunks are straws for thirsty leaves and branches", the straw "schemata" is applied to the tree trunks "domain".[279] Schemata refer to data about "straws" which is stored in memory.[280] We recall that in Lakoff's example above—love is a journey—the journey schemata, source-path-goal, is mapped onto the love domain. To be of use in comprehending our metaphor the straw schemata are modified by their context. (In the same way, Helstrup's "mad-dog" schemata are modified by the context "politicians".) In the trunks-straws example, however, there is the additional information conveyed by the phrase "for thirsty leaves and branches". This phrase points to the shared "ground" between topic and vehicle. Silk formulates this relationship nicely: "The vehicle's extraneousness isolates it, and a reduction, more or less, of this isolation is the effect of any operative neutral [/ ground] term; it gives the vehicle something in common with the tenor".[281] Verbrugge and McCarrell characterise ground as "abstract relations" rather than as

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[276] Verbrugge and McCarrell (1977) 494–533 at 510–1.

[277] Verbrugge and McCarrell (1977) 526–7.

[278] Ortony (1979a) 177. Cf. Verbrugge and McCarrell (1977) 517–9, 528–9. Writing from a perspective of literary criticism, Silk (1974) also draws our attention to "interaction", which he defines as "any local cross-terminological relation between the tenor and vehicle of an image" (79).

[279] Verbrugge and McCarrell (1977) 499, 527.

[280] See Ortony (1979a) 162. Cf. Minsky (1975) 211–77. Minsky's "frames" are similar to schemata, although he defines a "frame" in terms of a "stereotyped situation" (212) rather than an object such as a straw. Indeed a straw may constitute a subschema in a birthday party situational frame/schema.

[281] Silk (1974) 87.

attributes,[282] so that what the trees and the straws share are such relations as "suction and fluid flow" and "vertical cylindrical space".[283] The vehicle "straws" transforms the topic "tree trunks" by relating them to conduits for fluid, but at the same time the vehicle retains a structural consistency with the topic in the tubular shape which both straw and tree share.[284] Trunk and straw form an image metaphor in much the same way as bird cage and telephone booth in the example above from *The Birds*. Verbrugge and McCarrell's experiments suggest that for the comprehender, it is the vehicle which "will lead to a growth in knowledge when the topic domain is successfully organized by schemata that are unfamiliar or unconventional in that context".[285]

With these considerations about the importance of the vehicle we return to Helstrup's optimal conditions for the comprehension of metaphor and apply them to the urn image and its correspondences with the abstract ideas of death, deceit and revenge. In the first of these the literal visual urn which Orestes introduces to the spectators through mental imagery and which has a concrete reference as the singular urn that is hidden corresponds with a non-literal verbal signification of death with an abstract generalised reference to death which the spectators could be expected to attach to the familiar image of a funeral urn. The ground that relates urn to death is founded in the spectators' past experiences, and the metaphor could be classified as conventional.[286] The next instantiation of the urn is when Elektra laments over it. For her the urn, supposedly containing Orestes' ashes, is the literal visual sign of the death of her brother, the "beloved head"; yet to the spectators the urn at this point represents a non-literal verbal abstract idea 'deceit'. Finally, by a dramatic sleight (discussed in chapter two), the urn is transformed into the mask of the dead Klytaimnestra, a literal visual concrete sign which corresponds for the spectators to a non-literal, verbal, abstract 'revenge'. The ground that relates the urn to deceit and to revenge is established by the action of the play. In these relations the urn is a vehicle in unconventional, novel metaphors, while at the same time it retains its original conventional reference to

[282] Verbrugge and McCarrell (1977) 499, 525.
[283] Verbrugge and McCarrell (1977) 526.
[284] Cf. Gibbs (1994) 245.
[285] Verbrugge and McCarrell (1977) 527. This relation between topic/tenor and vehicle is underlined by Silk (1974) 11 when he writes: "The tenor…is the norm; the vehicle is a departure from the norm".
[286] For degrees of "conventionality" in metaphor see Goatly (1997) 107–8.

death. Not only has Sophokles provided a set of powerful and memorable conceptual metaphors which make lateral links between concrete images and abstract concepts but he also makes vertical links between the images themselves—urn, beloved head, and mask—which accord with the one-on-one image metaphors described by Lakoff,[287] or the "structural resemblance" which makes for strong metaphors in the discussion by Verbrugge and McCarrell.[288] The sequencing and interrelation of the images invites the sequencing and interrelation of the corresponding abstractions—death, deceit and revenge. In this way the urn may be seen as a cue to an organised matrix of information.

"Multiple meanings" in image shape[289]

Three theories in cognitive psychology which appear to have some relevance to image metaphor are homospatial thinking, reconstrual, and mental synthesis. Sobel and Rothenberg describe homospatial thinking as a "conceiving [of] two or more discrete entities occupying the same space".[290] This type of superimposing is not possible in the real world but is possible in mental imagery. The creator (or ποιητής in the case of drama) selects his entities and brings them together so that in their interaction they are transformed and recombined to create a new identity.[291]

Among the props that I study there is not only a superimposing of images in the same space but a spatial congruence which suggests a reconstrual of the images themselves. The psychologists tell us that it is the shape and contour of images which is most important in their identification,[292] and in the vividness of mental imagery.[293] In reconstrual the same shape can have "multiple meanings", as above in the image metaphor example of the waist/hour glass, or, more prosaically, a banana and a smile.[294] Figure 4 below represents the ambiguous duck/rabbit drawing used in experiments on reconstrual of mental

[287] Lakoff (1993) 229.
[288] Verbrugge and McCarrell (1977) 499.
[289] Kaufmann and Helstrup (1993) 123–50.
[290] Sobel and Rothenberg (1980) 953–61 at 954.
[291] Sobel and Rothenberg (1980) 955.
[292] Engelkamp, Zimmer, and de Vega (2001) 76.
[293] Pearson, de Beni, and Cornoldi (2001) 10.
[294] The banana/smile example is taken from the title of an article by Tore Helstrup and Rita Anderson (1996). The article is not about reconstrual, but about the use of images in mental synthesis. See further below.

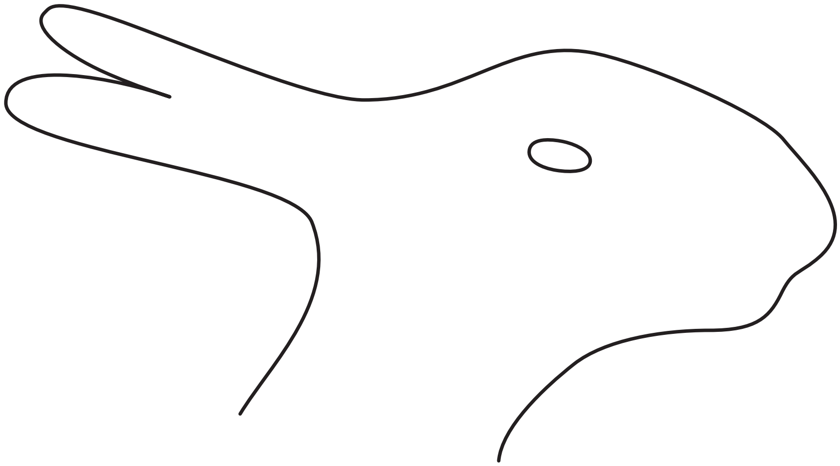

Fig. 4 Duck/rabbit ambiguous figure

imagery and its relation to creative thought, reported by Kaufmann and Helstrup.[295]

Relevant to the visibility of tragic props and their shape are the findings of Chambers and Reisberg, refined by Kaufmann and Helstrup, that perceived images are more easily reconstrued than mental images.[296] Plate II.v represents the superimposing and reconstrual of 'urn' images in Sophokles' *Elektra*. Such a representation is suggestive in a particularly concrete way of the simultaneity of imagery which is enacted by reconstrual, of its comparative function as images converge in one space, and of its anticipatory function which can produce a radical integration.

A further type of manipulation and combining of images which may be relevant to our tragic props is known as mental synthesis.[297] In a mental synthesis task, subjects use mental imagery to combine

[295] Kaufmann and Helstrup (1993) 138–45 at 139 Figure 2. As a result of their experiments with subjects who were high visualisers the authors conclude that "images may contain extra-intentional, perceptual content that can be used to create new interpretations of the original image" (142–3). Cf. Schön (1993) 155–61 and n. 14 on the process which he calls "frame restructuring and frame coordination" (160).

[296] Chambers and Reisberg (1985) 317–28, Kaufmann and Helstrup (1993) 142–4. Cf. Richardson (1999) 24–6.

[297] For references to the use of mental synthesis in scientific models, architecture, and problem solving, see Pearson, Logie, and Gilhooly (1999) 295.

a number of elements (usually three) to synthesise a new figure.[298] Instead of the abstract symbols used in previous experiments in this task, Helstrup and Anderson used concrete, real life elements, of the kind represented by our tragic props.[299] The experimenters suspected that such objects would not "transform and combine" into new identities, and because the objects already had independent meaning it may be difficult to reinterpret them.[300] On the contrary, their experiments showed that subjects manipulated these objects and created new patterns as successfully as they did abstract entities.[301] The mechanics of this imagery task is less relevant to the manipulation of the images of tragic props than is homospatial thinking or reconstrual, but the use of real life objects and the number of elements that the memory is working with are important factors in considering the imagery function of tragic props.

Conventional and novel metaphor

Another factor in considering the metaphoric function of tragic props is the levels at which these metaphors operate. As mentioned above, the urn as a vehicle for the topic death is a conventional metaphor, whereas the urn's connection with deceit and revenge constitutes unconventional or novel metaphors. Lakoff argues that most of our metaphors are conventional and arise from our experience of the world.[302] One of his examples is particularly relevant to Greek drama: "knowing is seeing". Lakoff explains: "The experiential basis in this case is the fact that most of what we know comes through vision, and in the overwhelming majority of cases, if we see something, then we know it is true".[303] In the case of the urn, the conventional correspondence between urn and death arises, as I argue subsequently for each of the props I discuss, from the lived experience of the fifth-century Athenian spectator. Novel metaphor, on the other hand, is an extension

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[298] Helstrup and Anderson (1996) 276. Cf. Pearson, Logie and Gilhooly (1999) 297 and Barquero and Logie (1999) 316, whose experiments in mental synthesis include five or six elements.

[299] For previous mental synthesis experiments see Finke and Slayton (1988) 252–7, and Anderson and Helstrup (1993) 283–93.

[300] Helstrup and Anderson (1996) 277.

[301] Helstrup and Anderson (1996) 289–90. Contrast Barquero and Logie (1999) 315–33.

[302] Lakoff (1993) 239–41.

[303] Lakoff (1993) 240.

of this conventional system or is the product of image metaphors.[304] In poetic metaphor (which is what we have in the metaphorical symbols of tragic props) there is usually a superimposing of conventional, generic, and image metaphor.[305] The second and third layers in our urn matrix, where urn/beloved head corresponds with deceit, and urn/Klytaimnestra's mask corresponds with revenge, may also be seen as consistent with Lakoff's notion of novel metaphor. At the novel end of its metaphoric content the image of the urn can involve the spectator not just in deeper understanding of human suffering but in change.[306] Goatly provides a memorable metaphor for this process of change, which he calls "reconceptualization", when he writes: "Many poetic metaphors undo the strings of our conventional category packages".[307] In the chapters which follow I shall attempt to trace these strings as the dramatists undo them in the metaphors of the props. I shall also examine the kind of blending—between concepts which the spectators bring to a performance and the reconceptualisation of those concepts effected by the dramatists—which may result in "emergent meanings" applicable to the Athenian spectators' own times.[308] If tragedy instructs by analogy,[309] then the props may cue new meaning in the real world. Before moving on to the chapter discussions, however, there is one final aspect of the image function of certain props in tragedy which cannot be separated from the cognitive: that is, emotion or affect.

Imagery and emotion

We recall Aristotle and his account of the learning and inference to which *mimesis* in art gives rise (*Po.* 4), the extension of this cognitive aspect of *mimesis* to tragedy (*Po.* 9) and the emotions which are

304 Lakoff (1993) 240.

305 Lakoff (1993) 237. Lakoff discusses generic images in terms of proverbs and personifications (231–5). For generic imagery in tragedy, see above in section II, *Generic images*. Cf. Lakoff and Turner (1989) on conventional metaphor (55) and poetic metaphor (67–72); and Indurkha (1992) section 1.4.

306 On the active spectator, see Wiles (1997) 7–8.

307 Goatly (1997) 152. At p. 162 Goatly provides an example of reconceptualisation at work in Paul Gallico's *Poseidon Adventure*. The shipwrecked passengers caught inside the up-turned hull of their vessel are instructed to view it "'simply as a mountain to be climbed'". Cf. Hausman (1975) 118, (1989) 9–10, and Lakoff and Johnson (1980) 145.

308 For conceptual blending see Turner (1996) 57–84, (2002) 10.

309 Cartledge (1997) 19, Garland (2003) 198.

inseparable from that tragic *mimesis*—pity and fear.[310] This is not to situate emotion as the primary purpose of tragedy as Heath argues,[311] but to stress its interrelation with image, word and thought in tragedy. In psychological science, Ahsen writes that to separate thought and emotion "is at best artificial and undesirable".[312] Kaufmann incorporates emotion into the modified position proposed above,[313] where the "situational context" is seen as integral to thinking and its symbolic expression through word and image. Similarly, the psychologist Bartlett emphasises the interrelation of affect, image and thought in conflict situations.[314]

Paivio includes emotion as an important factor in the memorability of images, and in the motivation and selection that lies behind the solving of problems.[315] In Paivio's dual coding theory there is an expectation that affect and emotion will accompany imagery since all belong within the non-verbal system.[316] Transportation theory in narrative is another area where emotion and image are integral.[317] Green and Brock understand transportation as "an integrative melding of attention, imagery, and feelings",[318] the sort of thing we may experience when we are absorbed in a story. Their experimental work suggests some aspects to transportation which may be relevant to the function of image, emotion, and thought in tragedy. They conclude that a major effect of transportation is "belief change", and that the influence of narrative persuasion is more persistent than rhetorical persuasion. As far as critical thought is concerned both narrative and

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310 *Po*. 1449b24–8.

311 Heath (1987) *passim*. Heath (43 and note 12) does not agree with the connections between *mimesis* and learning which Halliwell proposes in his discussion of the relationship of *Poetics* 4 and 9, (see above, section I, *Opsis, mimesis and the realising of universals*) and which have been important to my own argument. Cf. Croally (1994) 22–3, 26–7, 35–6.

312 Ahsen (1986) 33.

313 Section III, *Image and word*.

314 Bartlett (1925) 18 defines conflict as a situation where "one tendency to respond . . . is . . . blocked by another".

315 Paivio (1983a) 14–15.

316 See Sadoski, Goetz and Rodriguez (2000) 85, and 85–95 on their application of dual coding theory in education. Cf. the work of Goetz, Sadoski et al. (1992) 361–72 and (1993) 35–49 on the interrelation of image, emotion and cognition in reading.

317 See Green and Brock (2000) 701–21, (2002) 315–41. Under "narrative" Green and Brock include "novels, films, soap operas, music lyrics, stories in newspapers, magazines, TV, and radio", as opposed to the "advocacy messages" of "advertisements, sermons, editorials, billboards" ([2000] 701, 702, [2002] 323).

318 Green and Brock (2000) 701; cf. (2002) 323–4.

rhetoric have their weaknesses,[319] but Green and Brock propose that it is the combination of the affective and cognitive in narrative that gives it the edge over rhetoric in the forming of opinions.[320]

In metaphor, the expression of emotion is a primary function.[321] Stanford associates the emotional power of Aiskhylean metaphor with symbolism "in an age when thought was still symbolical rather than logical".[322] Taplin, writing on visual effects in Greek drama, sees thought and emotion working mutually to give meaning to what we see.[323] Nussbaum also writes of the cognitive role of the passions. She looks at the conflict of hard choices, in the case of Eteokles' decision to fight his brother (A. *Se*. 653–97), and in the case of Agamemnon's decision (A. *Ag*. 192–247), to kill his daughter Iphigeneia.[324] The opportunity for "learning through experience" (πάθει μάθος, A. *Ag*. 177, cf. 250) to which both Eteokles and Agamemnon fail to respond fully is, nevertheless, available to the spectators in their emotional and cognitive response to tragedy.[325] The part that imagery plays in this learning is made clearer in Nussbaum's discussion of Alkibiades' speech in Plato's *Symposion* (215a–222b),[326] a speech which she notes ends with a reiteration of this proverbial sentiment (παθόντα γνῶναι *Smp*. 222b7). Alkibiades approaches the subject of love through images (δι' εἰκόνων, *Smp*. 215a5), and his particular love for Sokrates. His story

[319] If a person is immersed in a narrative s/he may not critically evaluate the claims put forward in the narrative (Green and Brock [2000] 702, [2002] 334–5), just as the credibility and intent of rhetorical arguments and their speakers will affect the level of critical response they receive (Green and Brock [2000] 719).

[320] Green and Brock (2000) 718–9. I do have a reservation about the findings of Green and Brock to the extent that they rest on the examples in their 2002 chapter. The narrative example involves the graphic and emotionally charged description of the murder of a little girl in a shopping mall by a psychiatric patient, which lent support to the restricting of leave to such patients. The rhetoric example, on the other hand, is concerned with whether or not there should be senior comprehensive exams (336–7). The power of the image in the first is seen to be more persistent in securing attitude change than the power of the word in the second. The two examples, however, are hugely disparate. A better comparison with the narrative example may have been a debate on the question of furloughs for dangerous psychiatric patients.

[321] Goatly (1997) section 5.2.6.

[322] Stanford (1983) 108. See Stanford further on emotion and imagery (109–12) and on emotion and visual effects: Aiskhylean monsters (78–9), costumes and stage properties (81), masks (82–4), movements and gestures (84–8), and choral dancing (88–90).

[323] Taplin (1978) 170–1.

[324] Nussbaum (2001) 32–40.

[325] Nussbaum (2001) 41–50 especially 45–6.

[326] Nussbaum (2001) 185–93.

belongs to poetry rather than to philosophy: he will tell the truth in word (τἀληθῆ ἐρῶ, *Smp.* 214e6) and in image (ἔσται δ' ἡ εἰκὼν τοῦ ἀληθοῦς ἕνεκα, *Smp.* 215a6, "the image will be designed to bring out the truth").[327] Nussbaum comments: "Images are valuable in this attempt to make the audience share the experience, to feel, from the inside, what it is *like* to be that".[328] Nussbaum's words echo Aristotle, the relationship in *mimesis* and metaphor between this and that, and the bridging emotion which draws us as spectators to τὸν ὅμοιον,[329] "someone like ourselves".

This selection of commentators from literature, psychology and philosophy indicates the integral connections between emotion, imagery and cognition.[330] Although affect is not the focus of my discussion, emotion will throughout act as a filter between image and thought.

Summary

Figure 5 below summarises the main aspects of image function which I have introduced above. The theorists and their theories are mapped against the time frame of past, present, and future to suggest the processes which may be activated in the minds of the spectators of a play, in particular through the manipulation of the imagery of tragic props.

Aristotle lays the foundation for the function of imagery in thought with his analogy οὗτος / τοῦτο // ἐκεῖνος / ἐκεῖνο, "this is that", which leads to learning and inference through *mimesis* and metaphor. Paivio and Kaufmann refine the function to memory and thinking. The main cognitive operations which Kaufmann associates with imagery are the making of comparisons and anticipations. In the contemporary metaphor theories of Lakoff and Turner comparisons underlie the conventional metaphor based on correspondences in everyday experience. Anticipations, on the other hand, can lead to the forming of hypotheses, to the making of novel metaphors, to the reconceptualisation of problems, and to the emergent meanings which can result from the blending of concepts.

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[327] Translation by Gill (1999).

[328] Nussbaum (2001) 185.

[329] *Po.* 1453a5–6.

[330] Ahsen (1986) 31–7 has formulated this three-fold relationship as the Triple Code Model or ISM. In this model "imagination or image (I) is the first component; feeling, emotion, or somatic response (S) is the second component; and cognition, semantic relevance or meaning (M) is the third component" (31).

	Aristotle *Mimesis*/metaphor	*Paivio and Kaufmann* Image theory Novelty and conflict	*Lakoff and Turner* Contemporary theory of metaphor
Past	ἐκεῖνος / ἐκεῖνο	Image/memory/ conceptual peg	Experience/image
Present	οὗτος / τοῦτο	Comparison/ analogy	Conventional metaphor Correspondence
Future	Learning/inference	Anticipation/ problem solving	Novel/poetic metaphor Reconceptualisation Blending

Fig. 5 Main aspects of image function discussed in sections I and III

By attending to specific props and their image function in thinking and problem solving, the discussion of the plays in chapters one to three will seek to suggest the importance of *opsis* in the dramatists' repertoire of strategies. The props selected are precious objects which represent conventional metaphoric symbols in fifth-century Athens: the apotropaic shield (Aiskhylos, *Seven Against Thebes*), the funerary urn (Sophokles, *Elektra*), and the religious/theatrical mask (Euripides, *Bakkhai*).

My purpose in the discussion of each play is first to establish the spectators' past associations with the type of object (ἐκεῖνο) used as a prop, in accordance with Aristotle's prescription for prior visual familiarity (προεωρακώς). These past associations also form the basis for a memory which can be accessed or 'cued' by the visual perception or mental imaging of such an object. Such experiences, which are economised by the image of the object, form the ground or shared information between the object from the past and the prop in the present action of the play. Secondly, the prop (τοῦτο) is brought into a relationship of comparison/correspondence with the object from the past. We would expect here a metaphor that is conventional for the spectator. What we find in tragedy, however, is a slide away from the conventional. This slide is accomplished, to some extent, by a succession of transformations of our original prop. With each transformation a new visual metaphor is created, which reflects the changing ground between vehicle and topic. Except in the shield scene there are no more than three or four transformations from the original object in the mind of the spectator, so that the set can be easily retained in

memory and itself act as a cue to the plot and its issues. The third phase of my investigation asks in what way these new visual metaphors, built on precious objects from the lived experience of the spectators, may reflect back into their real lives in the future. This phase is speculative and the new metaphors, like Turner's proverbs, could apply to a variety of contexts. In Aiskhylos' *Seven Against Thebes* and Euripides' *Bakkhai* I have used the context of Athens' imperialism, in Sophokles' *Elektra*, revenge. Imperialism and revenge are not intended as foci for sustained historical discussion in their own right but are chosen as contexts which are 'available' and relevant to the citizen-spectator of the time, and contexts which are 'useful' for suggesting the way props could connect with contemporary issues. Imperialism and revenge are also universal contexts enabling connections for the modern spectator. If inferences were drawn between this thing and that thing, then the new metaphors could bring about a reconceptualisation of a problem which could lead the spectators to hypothesise about a different solution. In this way I shall argue for the importance of *opsis* through tragic props to bring to the fore the cognitive potential of images in thinking and, if not problem solving, problem reformulating.

Although the props are chosen from plays of the three canonical tragedians, Aiskhylos, Sophokles and Euripides, this is not to say that the ideas presented are applicable to tragic plays in general. Nor are these ideas on imagery the same as other investigations into sequences of imagery in tragedy such as we see in Lebeck's study of imagery in the *Oresteia* or Goheen's analyses of image sequences in *Antigone*.[331] Goheen lists imagery related to common human activities such as the military, the sea, agriculture, disease and cure.[332] "Elements drawn from such areas of experience," he writes, "are sufficiently public property and sufficiently constant to provide concrete and substantive reference when introduced in metaphors".[333] Such images conform with Lakoff and Johnson's use of everyday experience in conceptual metaphor. Similarly, in her discussion of the *Agamemnon*, Lebeck identifies "three systems of imagery" associated with common activities: sacrifice, the

[331] Lebeck (1971) 59–91, Goheen (1951) *passim*. Porter (1986) 19–42 discusses recurrent imagery in tragedy across the corpus of extant plays. He provides a useful bibliography to studies on such imagery in his notes (pp. 36–42).

[332] Goheen (1951) 104–19 and table, "Temporal pattern of the dominant image sequences".

[333] Goheen (1951) 105.

hunt and marriage ritual.[334] The net in her discussion of the hunt, and the tapestry come closest to the prop images with which I am concerned.[335] A distinguishing feature of the props in this study is that they are familiar but 'precious' objects in the lives of the spectators. In the mind they are spatially delineated,[336] economical and easy to recall. They are a cue to meaning within the play and also may remain a cue beyond the play, inviting the spectators to evaluate that meaning against parallel issues in their own lives. In particular, the images with which I am dealing—the shield, the urn and the mask—are sequenced through a superimposing of image shape on image shape in the manner of image metaphors.

Chapter one considers an example of a tragic character who thinks by using images. In the shield scene of *Seven Against Thebes*, Aiskhylos creates a *sequencing* of interrelated mental images bound by the circular shape of a shield. He shows the mind of Eteokles shaping and being shaped by these images, and in the process reconceptualising the notion of justice. Chapter two takes up again the image of the urn in Sophokles' *Elektra*, and the effects of its *reconstrual* on the mind of the spectator. Euripides' *Bakkhai* is the subject of chapter three, and the function of the theatrical mask as a cue to the *ambiguity* of the god (θεὸς/δεινότατος, ἀνθρώποισι δ' ἠπιώτατος, *Ba*. 860–1, "a god most terrible, but to man most gentle") and the reflexivity of victor and victim.

The apprehension of sequencing, reconstrual, ambiguity and reflexivity, are all aspects of the thinking mind. This study aims to show that they are also aspects of the mind "reasoning through imagery".[337]

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334 Lebeck (1971) 60–73 at 60.

335 Lebeck (1971) 63–8 (the net), 80–6 (the tapestry).

336 On the importance of shape and contour in identifying images see above in section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, "Multiple meanings" in image shape.

337 Rumelhart and Norman (1988) 555.

CHAPTER ONE

THE SHIELD: AISKHYLOS, *SEVEN AGAINST THEBES*: 375–676

The central scene of Aiskhylos' *Seven Against Thebes*, in which the Messenger announces to Eteokles each of the seven Argive commanders assigned by lot to the gates of Thebes, provides a notable example in extant tragedy of a sequence of evolving imagery associated with a dominant prop. Although the shield is not visible in the acting area it represents a highly imaginable and memorable artifact in the minds of the actors and spectators of the play. Part of the shield's strength as an imaginable prop arises from its connection with concrete visual representation in sculpture,[1] vase painting,[2] and coinage.[3] The 'shield' of the play combines a generic circular shape with a particular σήμα or device. Both of these visual features can act as cues to meaning,[4] and vehicles of strong metaphors.[5] I shall be arguing that not only has Aiskhylos created in this scene a sequence of images useful in memory and recall, but also an example of the use of imagery in thought. His central character Eteokles thinks through a processing of images; the spectators have the two-fold experience of watching this process vicariously at work in a dramatic character, and of becoming involved in the process themselves. This process involves the forming of inferences through comparison and anticipation.[6] Upon the image on each shield (with the exception of that of Amphiareos) Eteokles will superimpose another image until successive images form a sequence which invites

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1 See for example Boardman (1973) illustrations 4, 69, 70, and Beazley and Ashmole (1966) illustration. 7. Although not available to the memory bank of the spectators of the *Seven*, Phidias' shield for Athene Parthenos, decorated with scenes from the Amazonomachy and Gigantomachy, is indicative of the familiarity of this kind of representation, if not of its scale. Cf. Boardman (1973) 226–7, illustration 241.

2 See Chase (1902) 61–127 and discussion below.

3 See Steiner (1994) 49–60 at 53, 55, 57.

4 For a discussion of the image as a cue or "conceptual peg" see above in Introduction, section III, *Image, word and memory*, and Paivio (1983a) 10–16.

5 For strong metaphors see Verbrugge and McCarrell (1977) 499 and above in Introduction, section III, *Image word and thinking*, Comprehension of metaphor.

6 See Figure 2 and discussion above in Introduction, section III, *Image, word and thinking*, Comparison and anticipation.

the making of a novel inference.[7] If Eteokles himself fails to make that inference,[8] it is, nonetheless, available to the spectators who have followed his "reasoning through imagery".[9]

The shield scene presents two actors whose verbal and imagistic charge and counter-charge lead to the climax at the seventh gate when the Theban king Eteokles will assign himself as its defender against his brother Polyneikes. The Messenger and Eteokles, as the only two actors,[10] represent the conflict between Argive and Theban.[11] The Messenger, as the bearer of the report of each shield, is, for the spectators, the physical/visible substitute for the actual bearer of the shield, until the progression of Argive commanders culminates in one most like the Messenger, a fellow Theban, Polyneikes himself. Similarly, Eteokles is the visible substitute for the Theban commanders he will set at each gate, until at the seventh gate he realises himself. For the spectators, the convergence toward the fraternal duel which is attached to the succession of shield images may be reinforced visibly by the Messenger's convergence toward Polyneikes. This suggestive overlay of characters which emphasises the 'sameness' of the opponents Eteokles and Polyneikes, is realised further when the two actors return as the sisters Antigone and Ismene at the end of the play.

At the same time, the Messenger and Eteokles play directive roles, evaluating and interpreting what they have seen and heard for the spectators. At a verbal level the Messenger and Eteokles collaborate in making a story, while at an image level their roles work together in making metaphor. The idea that the Messenger himself treats his report as a story is reflected in the repeated verb λέγω ("I recount")

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[7] On the use of this technique in problem solving see "*sequential* processing" above in Introduction, section III, *Image, word and thinking*, Static and dynamic images, and Kabanova-Meller (1971) 349–50.

[8] Nussbaum (2001) 38–9 does not discuss Eteokles' reasoning through images, although she does note the peculiarity of his reasoning about the appropriateness of fighting his own brother.

[9] Rumelhart and Norman (1988) 555.

[10] Taplin (1977) 185, accepts that "up until the entry of the Herald [at line 1005] *Seven* can be played by two speaking actors". If the ending of the *Seven* were authentic (Taplin argues against this at 180–84), then, Taplin writes, "the Herald's part [at 1005ff.] calls for a third actor" (185). On two actors in the *Seven* see also A. H. Sommerstein *OCD* (1996) *s.v.* "Aeschylus" 27.

[11] The binary construction of the scene played out between attacker and defender is reinforced visually by the presence in the acting area of just two actors. For arguments against the inclusion of the other six Theban warriors see Fraenkel (1964) 276–77; also Taplin (1977) 149–52.

with which he holds his tale together as well as his announcement of sequence (Προιτίσιν, 377, for first; τρίτῳ, 458, "third"; τέταρτος, 486, "fourth"; πέμπτον, 526, "fifth"; etc.).[12] At line 375 λέγω is used in the optative, an invitation to the hearer and a general introduction. At line 424 the genitive of the perfect participle creates sequence and comparison binding together the bearer of the first shield with the second. By line 451 Eteokles joins in and demands the next part and the Messenger obliges (458). Eteokles again moves the story along to the fourth shield (480) and so their collaboration continues (526, 553, 555, 568, 632).

The structure of the story in the shield scene, narrated by the Messenger, is consistent with the structure of successful narratives outlined by Labov and Waletzky.[13] This structure consists of four main parts: orientation, complication, evaluation and resolution. The orientation in the shield-scene story involves the defence of a besieged city; the complication, made increasingly explicit, is that the war is not against a foreign enemy as much as it is against one's own kind. The resolution will be arrived at at the seventh gate. Without an evaluation the story is not complete.[14] Labov and Waletzsky define evaluation as "that part of the narrative which reveals the attitude of the narrator towards the narrative by emphasizing the relative importance of some narrative units as compared to others".[15] An evaluation by the Messenger comes at the end of each description of an opposing warrior and his shield-device, when he calls upon Eteokles to find an appropriate match. Eteokles' evaluation comes in his naming of that match.

At an image level the Messenger presents a shield-device which is a vehicle for a metaphor whose topic is provided by the Messenger's interpretation.[16] The use of images in this process of finding an appropriate opponent is consistent with the type of task at hand. This is not a situation which can be solved by following routine procedures but the novelty of the task calls for the *productive* type of processing associated with the use of imagery.[17] These images, then, need to be constructed

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12 For the "phatic emphasis" in the scene see Goward (1999) 71–4 at 71.

13 Labov and Waletzky (1967) 32–41. Also, Labov (1972) 354–96.

14 See Labov and Waletzky (1967) 33.

15 Labov and Waletzky (1967) 37.

16 For the terms "vehicle" and "topic" see above in the Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Conceptual metaphor. Cf. Goatly (1997) 9.

17 See Figure 1 and discussion above in Introduction, section III, *Image and word.*

in metaphors that are meaningful to the spectators. In general, the composition of the shield metaphors accords with conditions, schematised in Figure 3 in the Introduction above,[18] for maximising comprehension of the metaphor. In each case there is a correspondence between a literal visual sign with a concrete reference (the σῆμα on each shield) and a non-literal verbal sign with an abstract reference (the Messenger's or Eteokles' interpretation). In the case of the first shield, that of Tydeus, this metaphoric correspondence is particularly efficient. The "full moon" (πανσέληνος, 389), a literal visual sign with a concrete reference, corresponds with the "eye of night" (νυκτὸς ὀφθαλμός, 390), a non-literal verbal sign with an abstract reference to Tydeus' hubris (391–2). Taking this metaphor, Eteokles manipulates the imagery of the topic to produce a new metaphor: "night upon the eyes" (νὺξ ἐπ' ὄμασσιν, 403), a non-literal verbal sign with an abstract reference to death, corresponds with the particular death of the bearer of the shield-device (θανόντι.../τῷ...φέροντι σῆμ', 403–4), a literal visual sign with a concrete reference.

The imagery of the original shield-device thus becomes a cue to a metaphor quite different from the one first intended. This is consistent with features and processing of images described by cognitive psychologists Kaufmann and Helstrup. In their words, "Images may contain extra-intentional, perceptual content that can be used to create new interpretations of the original image".[19] Overall, the Messenger's interpretations point to the Argive shield-devices as metaphors for the aggressive arrogance of their bearers.[20] By reconstruing the images of the shield-devices Eteokles creates counter-metaphors which make for an effective defence for the Thebans. At the same time, by the very act of finding a matching inverse to the original vehicle and topic provided by the shield-device, Eteokles involves himself in a process of making a metaphor for a central theme of the play, justice. This metaphor evolves through the series of shield-devices.[21] Eteokles' shaping of the

[18] For discussion see section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Comprehension of metaphor, and Helstrup (1988b) 81.

[19] Kaufmann and Helstrup (1993) 142–3.

[20] See Fraenkel (1964) 280: "Die Schildzeichen zu Symbolen des Übermuts, der Gewalttat und eines ungerechten Rechtsanspruchs zu machen—das war in jedem Falle der Gedanke des Aeschylus".

[21] My discussion owes much to the work of Benardete (1968) 5–17; Zeitlin (1982); and Vidal-Naquet (1988) 273–300. These authors view the shield-devices not just as discrete entities but as a system. Benardete's system is centred on imagery, Zeitlin's on semiotics and Vidal-Naquet uses the schema of the sculptured pediment.

metaphor to 'justice is fitting retribution'—which we have seen to be apt in the case of the first shield-device—becomes, however, increasingly problematical.

Προεωρακώς

If the shield is to serve as an effective cue for the spectators to the evolving metaphor and meaning of this scene, the devices themselves must be easily imagined and remembered. Familiarity with context and myth, interest and pleasure in the craftsmanship of shields, as well as images seen before (προεωρακώς, *Po.* 1448b17) in historical shields, in the visual arts and in the stamp of coins will facilitate this memory and understanding.

Historic and heroic past

Seven Against Thebes was performed in 467, thirteen years after Athenian spectators had seen their own besieged city/Akropolis razed by the Persians.[22] Early references in the play to Thebans as Greek speakers (73),[23] and to Argives as ἑτεροφώνῳ στρατῷ (170) "an alien army", are suggestive of Athens' recent history.[24] The Khoros in the First Stasimon, fearful that their city will fall, anticipate the event in graphic images (321–44) which also may have stirred the memories of the Athenians in the theatre.[25] Historical memories may be grafted to knowledge of the myth of the civil strife that brought down the royal family of Thebes and its representations in the visual arts.[26]

Interest and delight in shield decoration stems from the heroic past. Greek receptivity to descriptions of the product of the skilled artisan is, as Tucker notes, "conclusively shown... in the prominence given to verbal pictures of such things from epic times downwards".[27] For the Athenian spectator there are poetic precedents of shield descriptions in

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[22] Th. 1.89. Hdt. 8.50–4. For the date of the play see Sommerstein *OCD* (1996) *s.v.* "Aeschylus" 26.

[23] In West's Teubner edition (1990a) this line is of doubtful authenticity.

[24] See Podlecki (1966) 30.

[25] See Wiles (2000) 95.

[26] One example of sculptural representation of the *Seven Against Thebes* myth is seen in the pediment of a temple in the sanctuary of Pyrgoi, c. 460 BC (Villa Giulia National Etruscan Museum, Rome). Cf. I. Krauskopf *LIMC VII.2* (1994) *s.v.* "Septem" cat. no. 47: 2.545.

[27] Tucker (1908) lii.

the *Thebais*, or descriptions of the work of the artisan-god Hephaistos in his creation of the shield of Akhilleus in Homer's *Iliad* 18.478–608 or of Herakles in *Shield* 139–320, attributed in ancient times to Hesiod.[28] Contemporary fifth-century interest in shields is registered in Ploutarkhos' life of *Nikias*, where it is recorded that after the general's death his shield was displayed in a temple in Syracuse.[29] It is the extra detail about the shield put into Ploutarkhos' account which reflects the pleasure derived by its fine craftsmanship; for the shield is χρυσοῦ δὲ καὶ πορφύρας εὖ πως πρὸς ἄλληλα μεμειγμένων δι' ὑφῆς συγκεκροτημένην,[30] "a welded mosaic of gold and purple interwoven with rare skill".[31] Shields that were booty from the battle at Plataia in 479, and then dedicated at Delphi,[32] are suggestive of the importance and visual prominence of these artifacts earlier in the century and nearer the date of the production of the *Seven*.

Iconography

Memory for Aiskhylos' shield-emblems—their images and inscriptions—may also derive from their relation to coins and to the iconography of the black and red-figured pottery of the sixth and fifth centuries. Steiner notes the image mapping ("equation") between coins and embossed shields, both articulated through word and picture.[33] She writes that "the personal devices on historical shields may even have acted as the model for coins, whose surfaces replicate some of the same motifs".[34] One example from the *Seven* is the sphinx on Parthenopaios' shield, a device also found on coins.[35] According to Chase, the individual details of Aiskhylos' emblems were familiar to the spectators from vase paintings.[36] Although the poet's shield-devices may not have decorated shields in use at the time,[37] the devices would

[28] Tucker (1908) lii–liii. Cf. Fraenkel (1964) 279. On "precious objects" in general and their "value" in ancient Greece see Gernet (1981) 111–46.
[29] Plou. *Nik*. 28.6. For the dedication of shields on the Akropolis see Lippman et al. (2006) *passim*.
[30] Plou. *Nik*. 28.6.
[31] Translation by Perrin (1916).
[32] Lippman et al. (2006) 560 n. 55 cites Aiskhin. *Ktes*. 116. Cf. Hdt. 9.80–1.
[33] Steiner (1994) 53.
[34] Steiner (1994) 53.
[35] Steiner (1994) 55.
[36] Chase (1902) 61–127 at 69.
[37] Chase (1902) 70.

have made plausible and memorable images because they emanated from familiar, visual representations. The first shield-device mentioned above is one example. The 'night' shield with its central full-moon is found on a black-figured amphora from the fifth century BC.[38] This is the image that constituted the original vehicle of the visual metaphor we examined. Given the importance of the 'vehicle' in the comprehension of metaphor,[39] it is significant that Aiskhylos' first shield-device image should be so apparently familiar to his spectators. "At the same time," writes Chase, "…the poet often introduces into his descriptions new elements intended to add to their brilliancy or to further the development of the plot".[40] Thus Aiskhylos' 'night' shield is "ablaze with stars" and his central full moon is the "eye of night".

Poetic manipulation also occurs in the choice of each shield-device and its place in a sequence of shield-devices. The creation of sequence hinges on the response each time of Eteokles, who, as Seth Benardete writes, "becomes so gripped by the images he hears about and so much enters into their spirit that he seems capable of summoning the next image through his interpretation of the previous image".[41] If for the spectator each shield-image acts as a vehicle of a metaphor which is only fully realised by the topic supplied by Eteokles, that same topic then becomes part of the ground shared with the next vehicle (shield-device) in the chain. By reducing the cosmic level of Tydeus' threat (represented by the night sky on his shield) to the human level of the death of the bearer of the shield, Eteokles prepares for the next shield in the series which depicts a naked man. The spectators have a series of discrete, though linked, images by which to trace, through the changing metaphor of each shield, Eteokles' change in thought. They may perceive that Eteokles will discover that the process through which he hoped to protect the city by matching appropriate opponents at its gates will realise his aim for the city but will also realise his father's curse of fratricide when he meets his own brother at the seventh gate. As Chase noted, the shield-devices serve the plot. But the devices, so

[38] Collection of Antiquities, Munich. See Drees (1968) Plate IX, Beazley no. 310320.

[39] See Verbrugge and McCarrell above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Comprehension of metaphor. Cf. Paivio (1979) 168–9 who writes of the "crucial" place of the concrete vehicle in metaphor as the cue to information. It is the "salient" part in its relation with the topic.

[40] Chase (1902) 69. See also Thalmann (1978) 119.

[41] Benardete (1968) 16–17.

clearly rendered not just for Eteokles' ears and mind's eye but to lodge in the memory and thought of the spectators, also may stir in them new understandings.

Prop and play

Before considering each particular shield-device and its interplay in the sequence of shield-devices, I look at how the notion of the shield fits within the spatial context of this play. Here we find a series of concentric circles.[42] In the fictional world of the play these circles are defined in the imagination by the fortified city, the shield and the eye. Real world spaces that may reinforce the spatial context of the play include the orchestra,[43] the *theatron*,[44] the Athenian Akropolis, and the enclosed city of Thebes.[45] Not that these real spaces have to be circular but rather spaces that can be encircled. The Akropoleis are clearly such spaces, but so is a *theatron* set into the slope of a hill, and a performance space which has spectators seated around it.[46]

Within the play the Argive warriors are κῦμα περὶ πτόλιν (114) "a wave around the city", encircling the city (121, 247) as the sea does a ship.[47] The city walls, ἐπάλξεις καὶ πύλας πυργωμάτων (30), which Eteokles calls on the Thebans to man, are perhaps demarcated by the circumference of the orchestra and the wooden images of the gods (βρέτη δαιμόνων, 96) which the Khoros address in the Parodos and may supplicate (ποτιπέσω, 95), cling to (ἔχεσθαι, 98), robe and

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[42] Zeitlin (1982) 55–7 notes that the moon is a concentric circle within the shield-device which is itself concentric and congruent with the shield, but she does not relate this shape to the performance and spectator spaces of the play nor to the topography of the Akropolis of Thebes and of Athens.

[43] On the shape of the orchestra of the Theatre of Dionysos in the fifth century BC there is much debate. For discussion and bibliography, see Wiles (1997) 44–52 who argues for the circular model and Rehm (2002) 39–41 who argues for a rectilinear form. Cf. Bieber (1961) 54–73, and Green (2003) 16.

[44] In using the term *theatron* rather than *cavea* for the place from which the spectators watch I am following Wiles (1997) 207.

[45] On the traditional fortifications surrounding the Kadmeia, see Symeonoglou (1985) 32–8. For the extensive fortifications of Thebes to match those of Athens in the Classical period, see 114–22.

[46] Moretti (1999–2000) 389, 397 describes the seating in the Theatre of Dionysos in the period around the middle of the fifth century as consisting of "three rectilinear sections of tiered seating arranged in the form of the letter pi" (389).

[47] On nautical imagery in the *Seven* see Thalmann (1978) Appendix 2: 142–5.

crown (101).[48] These spatial divisions would place the spectators in the *theatron* outside the 'walls' in the area occupied by the enemy Argives. Conversely, as Wiles points out, at the beginning of the play Eteokles' address to the citizenry could "serve to define the *theatron* as the walls of the city, enclosing the sacred core of the city represented by the *orchestra*. The audience as surrogate Thebans are encouraged to share the sense of threat from an external enemy and view the assault on Thebes as if it were an assault on Athens".[49] In support of this arrangement may be the appeal by the Khoros to Athene as protector of the city (ῥυσίπολις, 130; ἐπιρρύου, 165) at the beginning of antistrophe α and the end of antistrophe β of the Parodos. If directed toward the Athenian Akropolis and the Parthenon, this appeal "assimilates the protectress of Thebes with the patroness of Athens, and the people of Thebes with the audience".[50] Further, it is only to the fourth and central gate, that of Ὄγκας Ἀθάνας (487) "Athene Onka", that any of the mentioned deities is clearly attached. This accords with the proximity of sanctuary and gate on the south side of the Kadmeia from perhaps the Middle Helladic period.[51]

From the opening of this play, walls are significant, and the phenomenon of a fortified city, with its emphasis on inside and outside, may be experienced by the spectators by virtue of the very space they occupy in the Theatre of Dionysos. Despite appeals to Athenian sentiment through their goddess, the spectators may occupy a space both within and without the imaginary walls of Thebes.[52] The acted siege of Thebes by the Argives may not only resonate with the actual siege of the Athenian Akropolis by the Persians in 480 BC (when the Athenians were within the walls) but also with the actual siege of a

[48] Wiles (1997) 199 comments that "by the end of the parodos…the chorus have established the idea that the gods constitute an encircling protective wall separating themselves within from the enemy outside". Both Wiles (1997) 197–8 and Thalmann (1978) 87–9 envisage these statues as physically present although it seems to me that the strophic dance of the Khoros could equally well convey their intercessions of each of the gods. Wiles himself cites Athenaeus on the capacity of dance to make "all the actions clear" (119). Wiles, however, considers that lines 109–50 are astrophic (116). In Page's edition (1972) and West's edition (1990a) this choral sequence constitutes a strophe/antistrophe pair. See West (1990b) 102–8 for arguments in support of the responsion. See also Thalmann (1978) 87 n. 21 on the beginning of the ode.

[49] Wiles (1997) 213. For references to discussion on the question "Who is being addressed?" see Vidal-Naquet (1988) 278 nn. 18 and 19.

[50] Wiles (1997) 198.

[51] Symeonoglou (1985) 130.

[52] See Arnott (1989) 21.

Persian-allied Thebes by the combined Greek forces (from without) after the battle of Plataia in 479 BC.[53] An ambivalent space may also reflect mixed sympathy among the Athenian spectators for the fall of the royal house of Thebes with the deaths of its kings Eteokles and Polyneikes. Democracy in Athens had been established from 508/7 BC, following the monarchic rule of the tyrants.[54] The very word δημοκρατία dates from around the time of the production of the play (c. 470 BC).[55] Seaford writes of tragedy's role in reflecting this transition from monarchy to democracy, and in particular the *Seven* where self-destruction of the royal family and salvation for the city go hand in hand.[56] He proposes that "the salvation of Thebes may, in the original lost ending, have been marked by the institution of hero-cult for the dead brothers".[57] The co-existence of collective cult and continuing internal rivalry were indicative of the ongoing "tensions" of this transition in Athens.[58] A spectator space both within and without the 'walls' of Thebes could also facilitate hypotheses about the ambivalence in the play surrounding 'justice' as it applies to Eteokles and Polyneikes, the one sheltering behind a defensive justice, the other asserting an aggressive justice.

This interplay between offence and defence evoked by the circle of the fortified city and the internal nature of the conflict in the play may find a further mapping in the real world of the Athenian spectators in the ambivalence of defensiveness and aggressiveness within Athens' programme of fortification led by Themistokles in 479.[59] At a time when Greece had united to repel the Persian force of Xerxes, the Athenian programme, while an understandable defence against further foreign invasion, could in turn be seen as an act of aggression toward

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[53] Hdt. 9.84–9. Th. 1.90.

[54] Thoukydides writes of the increasingly oppressive rule of the Peisistratidai after the attempt by Harmodios and Aristogeiton to assassinate Hippias (6.53–9). Cf. Hdt. 5.55–65; Andrewes (1956) 101.

[55] For this date, M. H. Hansen *OCD* (1996) *s.v.* "democracy, Athenian" 453 cites *Supplementum epigraphicum Graecum* (1923–) 34.199 and A. *Hik.* 604.

[56] Seaford (1994) 346–8.

[57] Seaford (1994) 348. On the benefits of hero-cult for the city see 109–14.

[58] Seaford (1994) 346.

[59] For the fortifications built immediately after the Persian retreat see Th. 1.90. Also, Travlos' dictionary (1971) *s.v.* "Athens" 158, and J. Camp *OCD* (1996) *s.v.* "Athens, topography" 206.

Athens' Greek allies.[60] Thoukydides connects the completion of the walls of the Peiraieus, under Themistokles' persuasion, with Athens' imperialist aspirations: τὴν ἀρχὴν εὐθὺς ξυγκατεσκεύαζεν (1.93.4), "Thus he [Themistokles] at once began to join in laying the foundations of their empire".[61] Practical and symbolic connections between fortifications and empire are also suggested by the first of Sparta's peace terms with a defeated Athens in 404, that the Long Walls and Peiraieus fortifications be destroyed.[62] Ten years later Konon's rebuilding of the Walls and fortifications are a signal to Sparta of a resurgent Athenian empire.[63] After Themistokles the fortification of Athens was continued under Kimon, although in a manner less antagonistic toward Sparta, which Kimon promoted as sharing hegemony with Athens.[64] Nevertheless, the building of a wall on the south side of the Akropolis, in view of the Theatre of Dionysos, in perhaps the year before the production of the *Seven*, could have provided a visual reminder to the spectators of Themistoklean policy and the ambivalence of a fortified city.[65] Ambivalence could have been felt, even if the wall had not been built by this time, if Kimon's decisive victory over the Persians at Eurymedon occurred before the performance of the play in 467. This victory effectively dismantled the Persian threat,[66] as well as the

[60] Thoukydides records their anxieties (1.90.1): Λακεδαιμόνιοι δὲ αἰσθόμενοι τὸ μέλλον ἦλθον πρεσβείᾳ, τὰ μὲν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἥδιον ἂν ὁρῶντες μήτ' ἐκείνους μήτ' ἄλλον μηδένα τεῖχος ἔχοντα, τὸ δὲ πλέον τῶν ξυμμάχων ἐξοτρυνόντων καὶ φοβουμένων τοῦ τε ναυτικοῦ αὐτῶν τὸ πλῆθος, ὃ πρὶν οὐχ ὑπῆρχε, καὶ τὴν ἐς τὸν Μηδικὸν πόλεμον τόλμαν γενομένην. "When the Spartans heard of what was going on they sent an embassy to Athens. This was partly because they themselves did not like the idea of Athens or any other city being fortified, but chiefly because they were urged on by their allies, who were alarmed both by the sudden growth of Athenian sea-power and by the daring which the Athenians had shown in the war against the Persians" (translations of Thoukydides are by Warner in Warner and Finley [1972]).

[61] On the beginning of Athenian imperialism see Hornblower (1983) 21–2. For the dominance of Athens ten years later see Th. 1.97–8.

[62] X. *Hell.* 2.2.23.

[63] X. *Hell.* 4.8.9–12.

[64] See de Ste. Croix (1972) 172.

[65] On Kimon's wall see Plou. *Kim.* 13.5–6; Paus. 1.28.3; Camp (1986) 66. Tucker (1908) xliv writes that the building of the wall was begun in 468 BC, and Ploutarkhos writes that it was financed by the spoils from the battle of Eurymedon. There is dispute over the date of this battle which would then affect the date of the wall and its relevance to the play. For example, de Ste. Croix (1972) 175 dates the battle to "probably 469" whereas Meiggs (1972) 80–2 argues for 466 BC. Hammond (1967) 258–60 opts for c. 467 BC.

[66] Hammond (1967) 287.

rationale for fortification, and for an Athenian Alliance which disproportionately benefitted Athens.[67] A defining point for Thoukydides in the transition from league to empire was the revolt of Naxos,[68] dated by Finley as "probably in or soon after 470".[69] In the *Seven*, Tucker finds a reference to the unjust approach that Athens was adopting towards her allies in the term ἐχθροξένοις (606) "hostile to guests" used of corrupt citizens.[70] The *Seven* appears to have been produced in a climate of declining external threat to Greece and rising internal division, a climate which could give significant effect to the literal and metaphoric ambivalence of fortification.

Where Aiskhylos' own sympathies lay, whether with the anti-Sparta policies of Themistokles or the dual-hegemony policies of Kimon, is hard to know. Aiskhylos had fought in two Persian wars, under Themistokles at Salamis, and, earlier, under Kimon's father Miltiades at Marathon. His production of the *Persai* in 472 was remarkable for its sympathetic treatment of the enemy, βάρβαρος, "non-Greek" though he was.[71] Both Greek and Persian could be noble. The Persian queen's apparent ignorance of Athens (*Pers.* 231–44), on the other hand, allows Aiskhylos, through his Khoros, not only to reflect on Athens' natural wealth (in its silver mines, 238) and courage (240),[72] but to point up the superiority of Athenian democracy over Persian monarchy.[73] Aiskhylos also gives an example through his Khoros of the kind of rebellion which constitutes an internal threat to the monarchy (*Pers.* 584–94).[74] It is surprising, then, that when Dareios is called back from the dead, and the destruction of Persia is finally revealed to him by the queen, he imagines that its cause is the natural disaster of plague or "civil strife within the city" (*Pers.* 715).[75] Unlike the rebellion against a monarch that Xerxes has to fear, this "civil strife" resonates with the kind of *stasis* which, it can be argued, characterised conflict between Greek city states with the rise of Athenian imperial-

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[67] Hammond (1967) 289.
[68] Th. 1.98.4.
[69] Finley in Warner and Finley (1972) 608–9 at 609.
[70] Tucker (1908) at line 592 ff.
[71] See Hall (1989) 71–2.
[72] See Hall (1996) comment at line 240.
[73] Cf. Seaford (1994) 358–9.
[74] Seaford (1994) 359.
[75] Translation by Benardete (1991).

ism.[76] Hall comments that *Persai* is "a nascent expression of…tension between Panhellenic ideals and Athenian imperial ideology".[77] In 472, his admiration for Athens notwithstanding, Aiskhylos reminds his Athenian spectators that the victory at Salamis was a victory for all Greece (*Pers.* 353–432). As Hall notes, "The Greek agents are always 'Hellenes' rather than 'Athenians'".[78] At the same time Aiskhylos' sympathetic treatment of the sufferings of the Persians has the power to engage even spectators from a victorious Athens in the miseries of defeated empire. These dramatic representations reflect an even-handed approach more in line with the policies of Kimon.

Five years later, with the production of the *Seven*, the *stasis* that was Dareios' concern is dramatised as both *stasis* within the city between the brothers Polyneikes and Eteokles, and *stasis* between Hellenes: Argive and Theban. The Argives, as 'seen' through the ears of the Khoros and Eteokles and the eyes of the Messenger, are all terrifying noise and boasts.[79] Yet in the end there is nothing to choose between the two sides represented by the brothers. In deciding to meet Polyneikes at the seventh gate Eteokles puts on the same demeanour as the enemy: ὀργὴν ὅμοιος τῷ κάκιστ' αὐδωμένῳ (678) "alike in temper to him who speaks most wickedly"; θυμοπλη-/θὴς δορίμαργος ἄτα (686–7) "a reckless lust for the spear filling his heart"; ὠμοδακής (692) "fierce-biting". The parity between those within the walls and those without suggests that the battle between the brothers is a model for conflict between allies. By locating his spectators both within and without the imaginary walls of Thebes Aiskhylos can simulate that parity and the ambivalence of a walled city to her allies. Although Aiskhylos produced the *Seven* well before the Peloponnesian War, the tensions of difference among allies which the Athenian fortifications insinuated had laid a foundation for that war. Aiskhylos does not seem to me

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[76] Price (2001) *passim* argues that the Peloponnesian War was in its nature more a *stasis* than a *polemos*. Cf. Croally (1994) 55.

[77] Hall (1996) 12.

[78] Hall (1996) 12.

[79] As the Khoros 'see' the sound of the shields (ἀκούετ' ἢ οὐκ ἀκούετ' ἀσπίδων κτύπον; 100 // κτύπον δέδορκα· 103, "Do you or do you not hear the din of shields? // I clearly see the din!") so the spectators 'see' the boasts of the Argives, in part through the repetition of κόμπος in its various forms and compounds, e.g. at 391, 404, 425, 436, 464, 473, 480, 500, 538, 551, 794.

to advocate the fortification of the city, as Tucker maintains,[80] but to present the ambivalence of fortification.

In 458 with the production of the *Oresteia*, Athene's prominent role at the end of *Eumenides* offers further opportunity to Aiskhylos to promote Athenian imperialism.[81] As a loyal Athenian he does privilege his city: her wealth (400–2), her law (482–4, 570–3, 681–706), her justice (804–7), her respect for persuasion and negotiation (881–91, 969–75), her fertility and health (903–12, 938–48), her martial victories (913–5), her piety (916–20). But this picture of Athens does not derive from the fruits of her imperialism, permanent ally though Argos is promised to be (667–73, 762–77), but from Athene's capacity to ward off *stasis* in the city (858–66, 978–95). In contrast with the mutual slaughter of the brothers in the *Seven*, crimson robes for the Furies (1028) visually marks a mapping from evil to good, staunching "the endless flow of blood" by transforming the images of the tapestries in the *Agamemnon* and the bloodied robe in the *Khoephoroi*,[82] and visually cueing the resolution of revenge and civil strife with a new image.

The view of Aiskhylos from these readings of *Persai*, the *Seven* and *Eumenides* differs from the war-mongering tragedian evoked in Aristophanes' *Frogs* produced many years later in 405. In this comedy, *Seven Against Thebes* is a play "with the War-god filled" (Ἄρεως μεστόν, 1021) which inspires its Athenian spectators with battle lust (ὃ θεασάμενος πᾶς ἄν τις ἀνὴρ ἠράσθη δάϊος εἶναι, 1022). Such sentiments, embedded in comedy, are scarcely a serious appraisal of Aiskhylos' views on what is "useful" (χρήστα, 1035, 1056, 1057) for the citizen, or indicative of Aiskhylos' political or moral views in the *Seven Against Thebes*.[83] In *Persai* and *Eumenides*, plays where Athens—the city he has fought for—has prominence, Aiskhylos, nevertheless, offers various perspectives on the action. The reciprocity he establishes between Athene and the Furies when they first meet in *Eumenides* (410–420),[84] reflects the dual perspective which, in the *Seven* I have argued may be experienced by the spectators through the imagery of the fortified city and their relation to it.

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80 Tucker (1908) xlv. See also the comments of Podlecki (1966) 40–1.

81 In contrast, Hall (1996) 16 notes that in *Persai* Athene is "named only once, as Pallas, in a metonymy for her city (347)".

82 Lebeck (1971) 80–1.

83 For a survey of critical views on tragedy's involvement in questions of this kind see Saïd (1998) 275–84.

84 Ewans (1995) 204.

Reinforcing the ambivalence of the fortified city is the shield: a circle of defence for those within its protection or an aggressive circle of terror to those who face it. Eteokles' response to each Argive shield-device is to turn its aggression back on its bearer, making the device a defence for the Thebans. But at the seventh gate the distinction between defender and aggressor becomes confused. The shield of Polyneikes is not aggressive; its emblem, depicting *Dike* leading a warrior, and its inscription speak only of a man reclaiming his rightful heritage: "κατάξω δ' ἄνδρα τόνδε, καὶ πόλιν/ἕξει πατρώιαν δωμάτων τ' ἐπιστροφάς" (647–8) "I shall bring this man back and he shall have his native city and the occupation of his home". What Polyneikes will encounter at the seventh gate, however, is a terror in the form of the Erinys of his father's curse.[85] This is the device which Helen Bacon argues may have adorned the shield of Eteokles in a visually realised arming scene, the armed Eteokles himself shaped from the same mould as the statue of Ares.[86] Even if there is no visible arming, Eteokles' decision to meet his brother under the inexorable force of the Fury paints a clear image in the mind's eye of the spectator,[87] an image which may be reinforced by sound and meaning connections between Ἀραί (curses) and Ἄρης (Ares), Ἐρινύς (Fury) and Ἔρις (Strife).[88] Although introduced at line 70 the Curse and the Erinys do not feature again until their prominence in this third section of the play.[89] The sign under which Eteokles will fight is, as he and the

[85] Eteokles had earlier called upon the Curse and the Erinys (Ἀρά τ' Ἐρινὺς, 70) as protectors of the city. When he realises that by the appointment of himself as the seventh defender (282–4) it is Polyneikes whom he will meet, he narrows the significance of the curse to the Οἰδίπου γένος (654) "tribe of Oidipous". On the relationship between the Curse and the Erinys, Tucker (1908) at line 70 notes that the one is identified with the other. The Erinys is the "avenging Power" of the Curse.

[86] Bacon (1964) 27–38 at 34–5. Cf. Wiles (1997) 199–200, (2007) 271–2.

[87] This image is unlikely to have been shaped by prior artistic representation. Only after the theatre of Aiskhylos did the Erinyes appear to become popular in art. See H. Rix and B. Dietrich *OCD* (1996) *s.v.* "Erinyes" 556. For representations of Erinyes inspired by the theatre see Trendall and Webster (1971). Six of the twelve plates of "Furies" featured refer to the *Khoephoroi* or *Eumenides* of Aiskhylos (Plates III. 1, 6; III. 1, 8–12), but the "black Fury" in a scene inspired by Euripides' *Oineus* (Plate III. 3, 41) is particularly apt to the μέλαιν' Ἐρινύς "black Fury" of Oidipous' curse (977, 988, cf. μελάναιγις.../Ἐρινύς, 699–700, "the Fury with her black aegis") in the *Seven*.

[88] For the argument that in Aiskhylos' use of language "words that sound alike mean similar things" see Walsh (1984) 63.

[89] The Fury (Ἐρινύς) is also mentioned at 700, 723, 791, 867*, 887, 976, 988, 1055*, and the curse (ἀρά) at 655, 695, 766, 785, 787, 833, 894, 898, 946, 955). εὐκταίαν (723) and εὐχὰς (819) also refer to the curse. The lines marked with an asterisk are

Khoros know, the most aggressive of all for it will realise the deaths of both opponents and the end of the house of Laios.[90] The circles of the shields,[91] culminating in the εὔκυκλον σάκος (642) "well-rounded shield" of Polyneikes, narrow the focus of this play another degree from the circle of the Theban city marked out by its gods, itself encircled by the Argive force.

The final image in the series of ever diminishing concentric circles, which draw the shield-scene to its point of crisis in the duel of the brothers, is that of the eye. It is through the eye of the Messenger that Eteokles will make the appointments of his commanders in such a way that he himself will meet his brother. The Messenger is ignorant of Eteokles' intention to fight at the seventh gate (282–4) but repeats his confidence in his leader to choose the right opponent (σὺ δ' αὐτὸς…γνῶθι, 650, 652, "but you yourself must decide"). Eteokles fulfills that confidence by endorsing himself as the most appropriate match: τίς ἄλλος μᾶλλον ἐνδικώτερος; /ἄρχοντί τ' ἄρχων καὶ κασιγνήτῳ κάσις, /ἐχθρὸς ξὺν ἐχθρῷ στήσομαι (673–5) "Who else has better right? Leader against leader, brother against brother, enemy against enemy shall I stand". Yet he could hardly have proposed this had Polyneikes been allotted to attack the first gate, because it is the progression of shield-devices and their bearers, as well as Eteokles' own refinement of 'justice', which make his opposition to his brother inevitable. The eye of the Messenger seems to be directed by Eteokles' response to his descriptions, for the Messenger does not trace the sequence of gates around the circumference of the Kadmeia but the sequence of his report has him travelling back and forth across the Theban Akropolis.[92]

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probably interpolations; see Thalmann (1978) Appendix 1: 137–41. For the influence of the curse on Eteokles, see Solmsen (1937) 197–211, and for a counter view, see Long (1988) 179–89.

[90] That Eteokles understands this is clear by 695–7; the Khoros detail the doom of the house in the following Stasimon (720–91), an ode which begins and ends with the naming of the Erinys (723, 791).

[91] This shape is repeated through the fourth (489, 496), fifth (540) and sixth (591) shield as well as the seventh above.

[92] For the placement of the gates and discussion see Symeonoglou (1985) 32–38. At the third gate there is the sense that the order of reporting has been decided by the order in which the lot fell to each man (458–60). The Messenger had after all left as they were casting lots (55–6) and so may know the order, at least to the third. His detailed descriptions of each warrior at each gate, however, make clear that he is physically present at each gate, so that the order of reporting could be decided by himself and by Eteokles' response. The repeated reference to the appointments by lot (cf. 127, 376, 423, 451) and the establishing of one point in the sequence gives an illusion of an independent ordering, whereas it seems to me that the order of the shield-

His report at each gate depends upon an eye (ὀφθαλμὸν, 67) which he describes as πιστὸν ἡμεροσκόπον (66). This "trusty day-watcher" contrasts with the "eye of night" (νυκτὸς ὀφθαλμός, 390), the full-moon in the centre of Tydeus' shield. Again, this initial shield with its device familiar to the spectators, has an important cognitive role. It realises imagistically the extremes of the spatial theme. At one end is the encircling dome of the heavens, at the other, is the circle of the eye.

As we have seen, Eteokles takes up the imagery of the eye, and recontextualises it in the death of a man when night falls upon his eyes (403). Whatever terror is implicit in the eye of night is made explicit in the gorgon eye of Parthenopaios (537) whose shield-device of the Sphinx relocates the centre of conflict from the city to the Labdakid family. The Sphinx carries a man who is the target of the Theban's weapons, a representation by means of a shield-device (σῆμα) of Eteokles' vision of the death of a man. The man, however, is not Tydeus but a Kadmeian. Eteokles' attempt to divert the image of the 'eye' rebounds and returns with renewed and more precise threat to himself. The unadorned shield of Amphiareos (591) comes closest of all the shields of the commanders to being fully assimilated with the eye itself.[93] Amphiareos is the embodiment of moderation; he can see the injustice of the cause for which he is fighting (584–6). But in the death which he knows he will meet (587–8), he fulfills Eteokles' prediction for Tydeus, and moves the imagery of the eye closed in death a step nearer the death of Eteokles himself.

It is the curse of his father sitting on Eteokles' eyes which tells him of his death (695–7). Eyes and sons—these are the twin griefs (δίδυμ'…κάκ', 782) which Oidipous brings about, as what he has accomplished in the past with his father-slaying hand (ἐτέλεσεν/ πατροφόνῳ χερὶ, 782–3) will be repeated by the mutual slaying of his sons in the future (σιδαρονόμῳ/διὰ χερί…/τελέσῃ, 788–90). In the image of the eye is concentrated a most terrible violence which

devices is as much a product of the minds of the Messenger and Eteokles as are their interpretations of those devices. On "agency" cf. Wiles (2007) 270–1.

[93] Bacon (1964) 33 finds in the repeated references to the circular shape of the shields an "affinity" between them all and eyes. I suggest that Amphiareos' shield most fully realises this affinity. It is without a distracting device, and because Amphiareos' insults toward Tydeus (571–5) reciprocate those of Tydeus toward him (382–3) they draw the spectators' attention back to Tydeus' shield-device and its 'eye' of night. The shield of the seer, in contrast, is all eye. Cf. Steiner (1994) 56–7 who interprets Amphiareos' blank shield as the sightless eye of the seer or the coin valued truly by its weight or purity rather than arbitrarily by its stamp.

consumes three generations through parricide, incest, self-mutilation and fratricide. If the shield makes an image metaphor with the fortified city, then the shield and the city similarly map onto the eye. The fortified city and her allies, and brother and brother, are as eye and eye. This final mapping centres *stasis* within the human body, and specifically the body of Oidipous whose "bitter-tongued curses" (πικρογλώσσους ἀράς, 787) on his own children sum up the self-destructive violence of internal division.

When the Messenger returns to the acting space he integrates this series of circles which centre the plot in the deaths of the brothers. The circle of attacking warriors, now metonymous with their boasts (κομπάσματα, 794), has fallen, the circle of defensive walls endures (797), and the fencing of the gates with trusty commanders in one-to-one battle again suggests the circular shields of the Argives, their devices proven to be of no avail against their opponents. The binary divisions in the conflict, army against city, commander against commander are striking. Yet they resolve themselves in sameness in the repeated duals describing the brothers.[94] ὁ δαίμων κοινὸς ἦν ἀμφοῖν ἅμα (812) "Their lot was common to both", concludes the Messenger. By schematising the spatial context of the play in a series of concentric circles Aiskhylos has created an economical image for the recall of the large-scale movement of the plot. At the same time these images invite the spectators to compare and anticipate,[95] to relate Athenian policies of fortification against allies to fraternal conflict, and to hypothesise about the self-destructive potential of such policies projected through the self-blinding of Oidipous.

Within the large-scale movement from city to shield to eye is the progression of the shields themselves. Vidal-Naquet groups the shields in a pediment structure in which he opposes the first three shields to the last three, the first group signifying foreign war, the second group, civil war.[96] These groupings are compatible with the movement toward

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[94] κεῖσθον (810) "the two lie dead", ἀμφοῖν (812) "both", δισσὼ στρατηγὼ (816) "two generals", βασιλέοιν δ' ὁμοσπόροιν (820) "two kings of the same seed". Tucker (1908) section 10 discusses the equality of the brothers which Aiskhylos promotes.

[95] We recall that comparison and anticipation are the main cognitive tasks of imagery. See discussion and Figure 2 above in Introduction, section III, *Image, word and thinking*, Comparison and anticipation.

[96] Vidal-Naquet (1988) 291–2. He also sees this division in terms of male and female elements, the male on the left side of the structure the female on the right. These two elements map onto Eteokles as "warrior and citizen" and Eteokles as a member of his family.

internal war already discussed in the circle schema and also with the tension between aggression and defence which Aiskhylos appears to be exploring in the progression of the images of the shield-devices. Eteokles' fitting response to the first three shields seems appropriate in the case of a war against a foreign enemy. In the case of the last three shields, however, his fixed notion of justice strains to fit a conflict that is essentially internal to the city and his own family.

In the discussion that follows I look more closely at the series of images on the shield-devices and Eteokles' response to them, keeping in mind that as the spectators watch Eteokles "reasoning through imagery",[97] they too are comparing and anticipating and, like him, will make their own evaluation of what is just. The spectators, too, may experience the cognitive and emotional conflict of hard choices,[98] but for them the images may lead to a novel response as distinct from Eteokles' retreat to the conventional Fury of his father's curse.[99] The plates at the end of the chapter are suggestive of the progressive pairs of images which the spectators may hold in their minds' eye, and which may lead them to reconceptualise the justice of internal war.

First shield: Tydeus at the Proitid gate (Plates 1.i.a and 1.i.b)

Ἄγγ. ἔχει δ'ὑπέρφρον σῆμ' ἐπ' ἀσπίδος τόδε,
φλέγονθ' ὑπ' ἄστροις οὐρανὸν τετυγμένον·
λαμπρὰ δὲ πανσέληνος ἐν μέσῳ σάκει,
πρέσβιστον ἄστρων, νυκτὸς ὀφθαλμός, πρέπει. (387–90)
Mess. He has on his shield this arrogant device,
the sky is wrought ablaze with stars;
bright is the full-moon in mid-shield,
eldest of stars, eye of night, it shines forth.

Ἐτ. καὶ νύκτα ταύτην ἣν λέγεις ἐπ' ἀσπίδος
ἄστροισι μαρμαίρουσαν οὐρανοῦ κυρεῖν,
τάχ' ἂν γένοιτο μάντις ἀνοίᾳ τινί.

[97] Rumelhart and Norman (1988) 555.
[98] See Nussbaum (2001) 32–50, and above in Introduction, section III, *Imagery and emotion*.
[99] For the efficiency of the visual system in the *productive* processing needed for the solving of novel problems see Figure 1 and discussion above in Introduction, section III, *Image and word*.

εἰ γὰρ θανόντι νὺξ ἐπ' ὄμμασιν πέσοι,
τῷ τοι φέροντι σῆμ' ὑπέρκομπον τόδε
γένοιτ' ἂν ὀρθῶς ἐνδίκως τ' ἐπώνυμον,
καὐτὸς κατ' αὐτοῦ τὴν δ' ὕβριν μαντεύσεται. (400–6)

Et. And this night which you say is on his shield
sparkling with the stars of heaven,
a man's folly might become a prophet to himself.
For if with his death night were to fall upon his eyes,
truly for the man who bears this overweening device
it would be rightly and justly named,
and he himself shall prophesy this outrage against himself.

As the first in the series of shield-devices which progressively become more precise and personal in their message,[100] this device, as we have already noted, depicts the night sky. Chase would classify its moon and stars as "purely decorative".[101] The Messenger, however, embellishes the image and by imposing his own interpretation directs the understanding of Eteokles, the Khoros and the spectators. The device is ὑπέρφρον (387) "arrogant", the sky is φλέγονθ' (388) "ablaze", the full moon is λαμπρὰ (389) "bright", and "eldest of stars, eye of night, it shines forth" (390). All this information imparted through adjectives and possibly everyday metaphor (eye of night) brings the shield-device alive to the spectators, the Khoros and Eteokles, and makes it both fearful and marvellous. This device can see the enemy, or even, like the Gorgon's eye, can turn whoever looks at it to stone. The Messenger has begun the process of making a new metaphor out of Tydeus' shield, creating from a piece of defensive Argive equipment something aggressive and animate.

Eteokles' response begins with what is concrete in the Messenger's report, κόσμον…ἀνδρὸς (397) "embellishment of a man" and τὰ σήματα (398) "his shield-devices".[102] The sights and sounds of the report which threaten to engulf the hearer in panic are reduced by Eteokles to the man and his accoutrements. Not only does Eteokles centre his defence upon the man who bears the shield but, as we have seen, he collapses the shield-device—the night sky with its bright full-

[100] Zeitlin (1982) 57–8 notes the pun that can be found in the first warrior (πρῶτος) being assigned to the Proitid gates (πύλησι Προιτίσιν, 377), as well as further historical and mythical allusions.

[101] Chase (1902) 70.

[102] Zeitlin (1982) 55 associates κόσμον with the cosmic character of the shield-device. Cf. Steiner (1994) 51.

moon—into an image of fragile mortality (403). Tydeus is not named until his identity can be contained by the name of his Theban opponent, the son of Astakos (407), Melanippos (414). Instead, the shield-device is named for its bearer (405). The fierceness of Tydeus which is projected through his shield-device is returned by that same shield-device which prescribes his fate. In lines which parallel each other, the shield that is justly named for its bearer (404–5) anticipates "false-named Justice" on Polyneikes' shield (670–1).[103]

Right from this first shield Eteokles is concerned with Δίκη ("Justice") as, in Tucker's words, "the embodiment of the fitness of things".[104] If the "overweening" (ὑπέρκομπον, 404) night sky is fitted to the fate of Tydeus, so "the man who hates arrogant talk" (στυγοῦνθ' ὑπέρφρονας λόγους, 410), the man rooted in the earth (ῥίζωμ'…ἐγχώριος, 413) is both fitted to oppose Tydeus, and by that very closeness to the earth fitted to defend it. But mention of the "kindred blood" (ὁμαίμων, 415) Melanippos shares with mother earth may also raise the spectre of the kindred blood of Eteokles and Polyneikes which is the source of the conflict, and their blood connection with a mother who is also their grandmother.[105] Later in the play the Khoros will use the dual form (ὁμαίμοιν, 681) to describe the mutual slaughter of the brothers, and in a scene which ties back to Melanippos, the brothers truly share the same blood mixed in the earth: ἐν δὲ γαίᾳ/ζόα φονορύτῳ/μέμικται· κάρτα δ' εἴσ' ὅμαιμοι (938–40). Thus, even as Eteokles creates the fitting rebuff to the shield-device of Tydeus, he both controls its aggression and arouses anxiety about this justice which hovers so near his own family situation.

Not that this seems apparent to Eteokles at this point. His 'reasoning through imagery' in a situation of cognitive conflict is copybook. Out of the conventional image metaphor between moon and eye of night presented to him by the Messenger he creates a novel metaphor by

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[103] τῷ τοι φέροντι σῆμ' ὑπέρκομπον τόδε/γένοιτ' ἂν ὀρθῶς ἐνδίκως τ' ἐπώνυμον (404–5) "Truly for the man who bears this overweening device/it would be rightly and justly named". // ἦ δῆτ' ἂν εἴη πανδίκως ψευδώνυμος/Δίκη (670–1) "Surely she would be in all justice a false-named/Justice".

[104] Tucker (1908) at line 402. Cf. commentary on ἐκδίκως (at 594) and ἐνδικώτερος (at 659 f.).

[105] Although reference to the history of the Labdakid family is scant in the play to this point, the previous two plays in the trilogy, *Laios* and *Oidipous*, and the spectators' very likely familiarity with the story, could make ὁμαίμων a loaded term for them. Cf. Vidal-Naquet (1988) 275.

mapping eye of night onto night of the eye, which solves his problem. Through this reconstrual of the eye image he can anticipate the death of Tydeus.[106] For the Khoros and the spectators the hypotheses to which the novel image gives rise are not so straightforward. The Khoros are affected by their fear, and the spectators may be affected by their knowledge of the story—by what they have 'seen before'.

The Khoros reflect this "extra-intentional…content" of Eteokles' novel image,[107] when, although they assert that Melanippos "sets forth with justice as champion of the city" (δικαίως πόλεως/πρόμαχος ὄρνυται, 418–9), they also echo the language of blood and close relationship (419–21) which Eteokles has just spoken. For the spectators, the eye of the moon which dominates the night sky becomes a cue to a train of association which also goes beyond what Eteokles intends. The vehicle and its inversion, where the night of death dominates the eyes of a man, may share a justice that is fitting, but that same anticipated justice realised in the death of a warrior may have different referents. For Eteokles it is the death of the aggressor Tydeus. For the Khoros it is the possibility of the deaths of the defenders. For the spectators there is the hint of the mixing of aggressor with defender in the deaths of the brothers.

In seeking the just or fitting response to each shield Eteokles will become the subject of his own process. Tydeus' shield may have no inscription on it but its universal symbols of sky, moon and stars and their arrogant message nevertheless 'name' the self-destructive hubris of the human bearer (406).[108] The firmament itself represents Tydeus. Eteokles controls the aggression of the shield but his own constructed images and language create a new foe in the human form and language of the second shield.

[106] On reconstrual of images as a tool in thinking see above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, "Multiple meanings" in image shape, and Kaufmann and Helstrup (1993) 138–45.

[107] Kaufmann and Helstrup (1993) 142–3.

[108] In his commentary, Hutchinson (1985) at line 406 uses the demonstrative τήνδ' ὕβριν (also in West 1990a edition) instead of the article τὴν (in the Page [1972] edition). Hutchinson comments on the exceptional concreteness of the device's message, "an embodiment of arrogance".

Second shield: Kapaneus at the Elektran gate (Plates 1.ii.a and 1.ii.b)

Ἄγγ. ἔχει δὲ σῆμα γυμνὸν ἄνδρα πυρφόρον,
φλέγει δὲ λαμπὰς διὰ χερῶν ὡπλισμένη·
χρυσοῖς δὲ φωνεῖ γράμμασιν "πρήσω πόλιν". (432–4)
Mess. He has as device a naked man a fire-bearer,
a torch burns ready in his hands;
and in gold writing he cries aloud "I will burn the city".

Ἐτ. πέποιθα δ' αὐτῷ ξὺν δίκῃ τὸν πυρφόρον
ἥξειν κεραυνόν, οὐδὲν ἐξεικασμένον.
μεσημβρινοῖσι θάλπεσιν τοῖς ἡλίου. (444–6)
Et. I trust that to him with justice the fire-bearer
shall come as a thunderbolt, no mere semblance
to the noon-day heat of the sun.

The second shield-device evolves from the first, taking up the metaphor on the human plane to which Eteokles has brought it. Kapaneus makes a lesser claim than Tydeus—he comes as a superlative of human form (γίγας…τοῦ πάρος λελεγμένου/μείζων, 424–5) with a boast beyond the human (ὁ κόμπος δ' οὐ κατ' ἄνθρωπον φρονεῖ· 425), prepared to destroy the city regardless of the will of the god (427–9). The naked man of his shield-device declares the self-sufficiency of the quintessential athlete. Chase notes several examples of the naked man on shields in vase paintings which he relates to Aiskhylos' description here.[109] The Messenger does not embellish or interpret this shield-device beyond its general reference to the boastfulness of the bearer and the fear which the device incites. Its gold inscription itself 'speaks', making explicit the implications of the images in their progression from agent (πυρφόρον, 432, "fire-bearer") to means (φλέγει δὲ λαμπὰς, 433, "a torch burns") to deed ("πρήσω πόλιν", 434, '"I will burn the city"'). Indeed the shield-device refines the Messenger's report of Kapaneus' intentions—'burning' as opposed to more general 'destruction' (ἐκπέρσειν πόλιν, 427)—perhaps reminding the Athenian spectators of the burning of the wooden walls of the Akropolis by the Persians.

The Messenger's report is also suggestive of a developing story in the connections and repetitions in the vocabulary with which he describes the first, second and third shields. The embellishing adjectives of his description of the first shield, flaming (φλέγονθ', 388) sky

[109] Chase (1902) 69, 88–9.

and bright (λαμπρὰ, 389) full-moon, anticipate the flaming torch on Kapaneus' device, whereas ὡπλισμένη (433) "ready" and πόλιν (434) "city" look forward to the hoplite who will mount the city walls on the next shield-device.

Eteokles' response to Kapaneus' device also connects back to his response to Tydeus' shield, not so much through evocative imagery, but through the principle of justice with which he turns the force of the device back on its bearer. He centres his response on the verbal threats of Kapaneus reported by the Messenger, but gives visible substance to them by his manipulation of the images on the shield-device. The naked man is a vehicle for the topic of Kapaneus' arrogant threats; through his interpretation Eteokles undercuts the physical prowess of the naked man represented on the shield-device, which has the further effect of diminishing Kapaneus' actual gigantic presence, and Eteokles situates the Argive warrior's prowess in the exercising of his mouth (ἀπογυμνάζων στόμα, 441). In comparing 'this' with 'that' Eteokles maps the whole body (the naked man) onto a part (the mouth of the shield bearer). This image goes some way toward containing the aggression of the device and its bearer, but the force of this "mouth" in blaspheming Zeus himself (427–9, 443) is also given a more honed correspondence in an image metaphor.

Onto the fire which the man carries Eteokles maps the fire of Zeus' thunderbolt. Since Kapaneus has already verbally denigrated Zeus' thunderbolts by comparing them to noon-day heat (430–1),[110] Eteokles' interpretation of the shield-device reinstates the power of Zeus. Eteokles achieves a verbal victory by repeating and negating Kapaneus' words (445–6). But it is the image of the torch and the thunderbolt that can act as a cue for the spectators to the defeat of both Kapaneus' actions and his words. The torch combines two concrete visual signs on Kapaneus' shield: the action sign of the fire-bearer and the verbal sign of his threat ("πρήσω πόλιν", 434, '"I will burn the city"'). To make these correspond with the fire of Zeus' thunderbolt is to consume the physical and the verbal hubris of Kapaneus. The correspondence of a literal, visual sign with a concrete reference (the

[110] Fraenkel (1964) comments on the threefold (dreimal) reference to Zeus' lightening and thunder in Hesiod's description of the battle of Zeus and the Titans in the *Theogony* and that this daring (kühner) and decorative piece (Schmuckstück) may have impressed Aiskhylos so that "in die wilden Lästerungen einfügte, mit denen ein anderer Empörer den Zeus herausfordert" (288).

torch-bearer who will burn the city) with a non-literal verbal sign with an abstract reference (the fire-bearing thunderbolt of Zeus which he trusts [πέποιθα, 444] will come to Kapaneus) makes for a fully comprehensible metaphor for the spectators.[111] The torch has been reconceptualised as representing the power of Zeus in the defence of the Thebans. At the same time, the reconstrual of the torch image into the thunderbolt image compounds the conceptual metaphor with the image mapping.[112] Eteokles is using images here to think, to compare and to anticipate. Appropriately he appoints as Kapaneus' opponent the fiery (αἴθων, 448) Polyphontes.

Not only does Eteokles make a just and fitting counter-blow (ξὺν δίκῃ, 444) to Kapaneus but the image of the sun at its zenith, although inferior to Zeus' thunderbolt, nevertheless resonates with and overwhelms other mid-points: the full-moon in the middle of Tydeus' shield and the simile which describes his shouting as like the noontide hissings of a snake (μεσημβριναῖς κλαγγῆσιν ὡς δράκων, 381). By naming the sun Eteokles turns Kapaneus' imagery against his own ally in Tydeus. In the context of the artifact which is the shield-device Eteokles also seems to draw out the difference between the mere representation which is ἄνδρα πυρφόρον (432) "a man a fire-bearer" and the thunderbolt οὐδὲν ἐξεικασμένον (445) "no mere semblance".[113] As he says at the start of this central scene: οὐδ' ἑλκοποιὰ γίγνεται τὰ σήματα (398) "the shield-devices are not wound-makers".

His own interpretations of the σήματα (shield-devices), on the other hand, attempt to create the reality of the death of the shield-bearer. His application of justice which matches night with night, and fire with fire, takes generic aspects of the devices and particularises them as weapons against their human bearers. While he can maintain *dike* (justice) as a logical, as opposed to an ethical, principle,[114] this procedure produces a successful defence for Eteokles. The Khoros, who have been present during Eteokles' 'reasoning through imagery' endorse the direction of

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111 See Figure 3 and discussion above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Comprehension of metaphor.

112 The combination of "attributional" and "relational" mappings constitute Gibbs' "double metaphors" (1994) 244–5, and Verbrugge and McCarrell's strong metaphors (1977) 499.

113 That is, the phrase seems to work both ways; it suggests the reality of the thunderbolt as well as its superiority to the sun. Cf. Benardete (1968) 6 and particularly note 17.

114 See Tucker (1908) at line 431on the sense of *dike*.

his image making: ὄλοιθ’ (452) “May he die” is their wish for any making loud boasts against the city. Their mention of the thunderbolt (453) and the city (452), however, turns the mind of the spectators back to the connection between shield-device and interpretation. Eteokles has found the perfect match for the enemy who would fire the city but the Khoros end with fears far more fitting to the Athenians’ own experience at the hands of the Persians. At the anticipating/hypothesising end of problem solving there may well be again divergent conclusions. The Khoros graphically express their fears of the enemy within their walls (454–6), another view of reality to balance that of Eteokles, and one which will come even closer with the Messenger’s description of the third shield.

Third shield: Eteoklos at the Neistean gate
(Plates 1.iii.a and 1.iii.b)

Ἄγγ. ἐσχημάτισται δ’ ἀσπὶς οὐ σμικρὸν τρόπον·
ἀνὴρ δ’ ὁπλίτης κλίμακος προσαμβάσεις
στείχει πρὸς ἐχθρῶν πύργον, ἐκπέρσαι θέλων·
βοᾷ δὲ χοὖτος γραμμάτων ἐν ξυλλαβαῖς,
ὡς οὐδ’ ἂν Ἄρης σφ’ ἐκβάλοι πυργωμάτων. (465–9)

Mess. His shield is embellished in no modest manner:
an armed man is climbing scaling ladders
against his enemies’ tower, intent on destruction;
and he too cries aloud in written syllables
that not even Ares could cast him from the ramparts.

Ἐτ. …καὶ δύ’ ἄνδρε καὶ πόλισμ’ ἐπ’ ἀσπίδος
ἑλὼν λαφύροις δῶμα κοσμήσει πατρός. (478–9)

Et. …Two men and a city on a shield
will he capture and with the spoils will he decorate his father’s house.

There is nothing symbolic or hyperbolic about the third shield-device. It is a literal representation of an attack against a city, particularised in the scaling of the city-wall by a single hoplite.[115] The Messenger evokes the menace of the scene with his description of the sounds made by

[115] On this progression toward the literal see Benardete (1968) 8: “Now an image becomes the equivalent of that of which it is an image”. Also, Zeitlin (1982) 75: “The first triad of shields then, which began with the remote isolation of the cosmic symbol, ends with the iconic representation of the real, the actual situation at hand which this third emblem anticipates”.

Eteoklos' mares: ἐμβριμωμένας, 461, "snorting"; βάρβαρον τρόπον, 463, "a foreign tune"; μυκτηροκόμποις πνεύμασιν, 464, "sneering nostril breath"; sounds which transmit the alien and boastful nature of their master. But although that boastfulness is taken up by the writing on the shield-device, it is muted by being reported in indirect speech. This device lacks the personal ferocity of the bearer conveyed by the shield of Kapaneus. It stands as an intermediary between the second and seventh shields sharing with them the depiction of the human form and the written message. For the spectators, the shield-device as a replica of its bearer may have held the fascination reflected by the Messenger (465). Such duplication was already familiar to them through vase painting.[116]

To the previous two devices Eteokles' response has divided between a self-empowering interpretation of the Argive warrior and his shield, and a description of an appropriate Theban opponent. In response to the shield-device of Eteoklos, Eteokles focuses exclusively on the Theban opponent, so that his two line interpretation of the shield in the context of Megareus' success is delivered with surprising economy and effect. The image itself and the spectators' familiarity with the artistic technique of duplication are sufficient. Shield and bearer so closely mimic each other that Eteokles can speak of the man and the city on the shield as though they were real (478). His reference to two men (δύ' ἄνδρε, 478) compresses a mapping from the shield image onto the anticipated image of Eteoklos mounting the wall of Thebes, a double decoration (κοσμήσει, 479; cf. κόσμον…ἀνδρὸς, 397) for Kreon's house if Eteoklos is defeated. This metaphor brings the enemy dangerously and realistically close to Thebes before an uncertain defeat (ἢ…ἢ, 477–8).

Eteokles' own identity with the bearer of the shield is suggested by their similar sounding names; the image of the hoplite on the shield, on the other hand, anticipates that of the hoplite on Polyneikes' shield,

[116] See Chase (1902) 114 catalogue items CLXXVIII and CLXXIX. The kylix at CLXXVIII (Berlin 2307, Beazley no. 203510) from the end of the archaic period, depicts a hoplite runner on the shield of a hoplite runner, the shield-figure a close though not exact miniature copy of the shield-bearer. For a part illustration of this kylix, see the dictionary of Daremberg et Saglio (1887) 1664, Fig. 2232. A parallel example is depicted on a red-figured Attic amphora, 500–475 BC, Louvre, Paris (Drees [1968] Plate 39, Beazley no. 201904). On this vase, because the hoplite is himself painted within a circle on the vase, there is an illusion that he too is a shield-device and the real bearer of the shield is a triplicate.

which is clearly a representation of himself. If, for the spectators, this third shield awakens associations with the brothers, the spectators may also reflect that the defeat of Eteoklos by Megareus would produce the same result for the city as the brothers' mutual slaughter actually does. The rule of Thebes will pass from the race of Oidipous to Kreon, so that figuratively the brothers and the city become spoils for the house of Megareus' father Kreon (479). Eteokles' interpretations increasingly point toward his own inevitable role in the realisation of justice. In their pairing of success for the Thebans (εὐτυχεῖν, 481) with misfortune for the Argives (δυστυχεῖν, 482), the Khoros reiterate the pattern of Eteokles' conception of justice, and against the boast on the shield with its allusion to Ares they look to Ζεὺς νεμέτωρ (485) "Zeus the Avenger". Justice sits squarely with Eteokles in this configuration. His opposite actor, the Messenger, even begins to assume the characteristics of the enemy. κόμπαζ' ἐπ' ἄλλῳ (480) "Boast for another",[117] Eteokles tells him. At the same time the pairings which are meant to represent differences too easily slide into similarities. The names of Eteokles and Eteoklos, the echoing of good fortune with bad fortune, the Theban Messenger as substitute Argive warrior all serve to blur distinctions between friend and foe and to cast uncertainty around the domain of justice. The image mappings which worked well for the first and second shields—eye of night/night of eye, fire-bearing torch/fire-bearing thunderbolt, and the blending which produced a metaphor for justice as fitting retribution—ironically fit too well in the case of the third shield. The vehicle, so critical to the spectators' understanding of metaphor,[118] may point to a different topic if Eteokles' "two men" interpretation directs the spectators back to the fraternal conflict which they know from myth.

Extending this doubling motif from the third shield-device—the double of its bearer and an expression of a fitness defined by similarity—at the fourth gate δίκη finds her fitness in the opposition of old enemies, two gods and two shield-bearers. By opposing the shield-device of Hippomedon with the shield-device of Hyperbios at the midpoint of the series of devices Eteokles creates two equivalent concrete

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[117] For this point see Benardete (1968) 8.

[118] See Verbrugge and McCarrell (1977) 510–1, and above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Comprehension of metaphor.

images for the spectators, their most memorable cue to his logical sense of justice.

Fourth shield: Hippomedon at the gate neighbouring Athene Onka (Plates 1.iv.a and 1.iv.b)

Ἄγγ. ἅλων δὲ πολλήν, ἀσπίδος κύκλον λέγω,
ἔφριξα δινήσαντος· οὐκ ἄλλως ἐρῶ.
ὁ σηματουργὸς δ' οὔ τις εὐτελὴς ἄρ' ἦν,
ὅστις τόδ' ἔργον ὤπασεν πρὸς ἀσπίδι,
Τυφῶν ἱέντα πυρπνόον διὰ στόμα
λιγνὺν μέλαιναν, αἰόλην πυρὸς κάσιν·
ὄφεων δὲ πλεκτάνησι περίδρομον κύτος
προσηδάφισται κοιλογάστορος κύκλου. (489–96)

Mess. When he whirled a great threshing-floor, I mean the circle of his shield,
I shuddered; I cannot say otherwise.
The maker of shield-devices was no poor craftsman
who put this work upon the shield,
Typhon sending forth through his fire-breathing mouth
black smoke, flickering sister of fire;
with coils of snakes at its rim the concave cover
of the hollow-bellied circle is fastened.

Ἐτ. ξυνοίσετον δὲ πολεμίους ἐπ' ἀσπίδων
θεούς· ὃ μὲν γὰρ πυρπνόον Τυφῶν ἔχει,
Ὑπερβίῳ δὲ Ζεὺς πατὴρ ἐπ' ἀσπίδος
σταδαῖος ἧσται διὰ χερὸς βέλος φλέγων.
κοὔπώ τις εἶδε Ζῆνά που νικώμενον. (510–4)

Et. The two shall bear on their shields enemy
gods: for one has fire-breathing Typhon
but on the shield of Hyperbios Father Zeus
is seated erect setting ablaze the thunderbolt through his hand.
And no one yet has seen Zeus anywhere defeated.[119]

The Messenger's report of Hippomedon's shield includes not only a description of the shield-device but also of the shield itself, the way in which Hippomedon handles it (δινήσαντος, 490, "whirling") and the Messenger's reaction to it (ἔφριξα, 490, "I shuddered"). Its circular shape, reinforced by the repetition κύκλον (489)//κύκλου (496) which encloses the description, its likeness to a great threshing floor,

[119] That is, "in artistic representation" (Verrall [1887] at line 501).

and its whirling evoke the play's spatial context of encirclement. The hollow-bellied circle of the shield threatens to encompass and consume the city. The shield-device, again a tribute to the skill of the craftsman, introduces a new element into the pairing of opponents. From the cosmic opposition of night against night, to the elemental, fire against fire, to the human, man against man, this fourth, pivotal shield pits god against god.[120] Not only does the framing of Zeus and Typhon by the shields themselves make these images particularly memorable but the traditional opposition of the two gods is an image already familiar to the spectators through legend and art.[121]

The opposition of these gods is also prepared for within the series of devices. The fire-breathing Typhon is an immortal counterpart to the fire-bearing man on the shield of Kapaneus and the thunderbolt that would spell his demise is actually realised in the hand of Zeus on the shield of Hyperbios. Eteokles mirrors the language and imagery from the Messenger's report of the shield of Kapaneus, φλέγει δὲ λαμπὰς διὰ χερῶν (433) "a torch burns in his hands", in his own description of the shield of Hyperbios, διὰ χερὸς βέλος φλέγων (513) "setting ablaze the thunderbolt through his hand". Just as the two gods on the shields are hostile to each other (510–1), the two men who bear the shields seem to be paired as old enemies (509). Even their physical forms make a pair: Ἱππομέδοντος σχῆμα καὶ μέγας τύπος (488) "Hippomedon's figure and huge form" matched by Hyperbios οὔτ' εἶδος οὔτε θυμὸν οὐδ' ὅπλων σχέσιν/μωμητός (507–8) "neither in form nor courage nor the fashion of his arms to be reproached". Yet Eteokles goes beyond his principle of justice when he draws from this equivalence an analogy which gives the advantage to the Theban. As Zeus is greater than Typhon, he reasons, so will Hyperbios be greater than Hippomedon (517–20). Eteokles does not have to be inventive with his images here. The solution to his problem can be found through a *reproductive* level of processing, by applying a mythic (verbal) precedent.[122] Against the

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[120] Aiskhylos clearly regards the monster Typhon as a god (511, 522–3). Schefold (1966) 183 includes Typhon in the "family tree of the gods".

[121] See the story of Typhoeus in Hesiod's *Theogony* 820–80. For artistic representations see Schefold (1966) Fig. 17 of a shield relief from Olympia, c. 580 BC, and Arias (1962) Plate XXV, Beazley no. 1004764. This plate is of a hydria depicting the battle of Zeus and Typhon, c. 550–30. In both of these representations Typhon is a hybrid of man, bird and serpent. It does not breathe fire and smoke. In both, Zeus is equipped with his thunderbolt but is not seated.

[122] For the use of the verbal system in *reproductive* processing see Figure 1 and discussion above in Introduction, section III, *Image and word*.

shield of Tydeus he had sought justice through the medium of the prophetic signs of the night sky (406), against the shield of Kapaneus he had sought justice in the trust that Zeus' thunderbolt would exact retribution (444–5), and against the shield of Eteoklos he had admitted the possibility of success or failure (477–9). His confidence in success at this fourth gate reflects a move away from the thinking in images appropriate to a novel problem, and toward the verbal reasoning appropriate to a more familiar problem. He is not responding directly to the image of the shield-device but "by reason" of it (πρὸς λόγον τοῦ σήματος, 518).

The conclusion drawn by Eteokles that victory will go to Hyperbios "by reason of his shield-device" is complemented by the Khoros extrapolating on the fate of Hippomedon. They take Eteokles' lead and retreat to the certainties of the verbal system. In describing Hippomedon they reconfigure the imagery of his shield-device with the intention of conveying his inevitable defeat: τὸν Διὸς ἀντίτυπον ἔχοντ' (521) "the man with the antitype of Zeus". This modifying phrase, however, suggests an equal contest. Not only does it recall the physical might of the man himself, his μέγας τύπος (488) "huge form",[123] but Typhon, described in such detail by the Messenger, is now defined in relation to Zeus. The image may rob the monster of its unique and ferocious characteristics, but, by making Typhon the antitype of Zeus, the Khoros grant it an equality with the father of the gods.[124] The mapping on the shield-devices between two different gods becomes, through the response of the Khoros, an image mapping between type and antitype. In this form the images are most truly the next pair in the image sequence.[125] Again the pairing which has been manipulated by Eteokles to Theban advantage

[123] For a discussion of the semantic relations in 488 and 521, see Zeitlin (1982) 87–8.

[124] The closeness of the match is clear in Hesiod's account (*Theog*. 836–8): καί νύ κεν ἔπλετο ἔργον ἀμήχανον ἤματι κείνῳ,/καί κεν ὅ γε θνητοῖσι καὶ ἀθανάτοισιν ἄναξεν, /εἰ μὴ ἄρ' ὀξὺ νόησε πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε· "A thing past help would have happened that day and he would have ruled over immortals and mortals, if the king of men and gods had not thought quickly" (translation by Caldwell [1987]). Cf. Steiner (1994) 54: "The 'countersign' is not only an opponent but also a reverse image, the exact equivalent of the original", even as the stamp on a coin is "the exact equivalent" of the die that impresses it.

[125] Although this pairing has not been represented by plates, it may be imagined by overlaying the plate of Zeus with its mirror image.

rebounds on him with its hints of the all too equal contest against his brother to which his own choices are leading him.[126]

It is after this point where Typhon opposes Zeus in the series of shield-devices that Vidal-Naquet identifies a shift from images associated with external war to those associated with internal war.[127] This transitional point, as I have suggested above, may also apply to the climate in which the *Seven* was produced. We recall that following the defeat of Xerxes in 480 Thoukydides identifies imperalist overtones in Themistokles' fortification programme of 479 and a decisive turning-point in the rise of Athenian imperialism with the revolt of Naxos around 470. In Pindar's first *Pythian Ode* (15–28) of 470 BC, Typhon, assimilated with the giants rather than with the gods, is symbolic of barbarians.[128] The spectators of the *Seven* in 467 BC may similarly associate Typhon with their recent external war against the Persians. Parker, however, suggests a subsequent revision to this symbolism in Pindar's eighth *Pythian* (12–18) of 446 BC.[129] In that ode, Parker notes, the imagery of giants may point to Athenian imperialism as it was viewed by other Greek states. Such a transformation of 'other' into 'self' in the symbolism of Typhon resonates with Aiskhylos' type/antitype representation of Zeus and Typhon. Athenian spectators, who, with Eteokles, put their confidence in the patronage of Zeus, the father of their own Athene at this gate named in her honour (Ὄγκας Ἀθάνας, 487, "Onka Athene") may concur with Eteokles' reproductive thinking. On the other hand the type/antitype mapping accords with the fratricide they know to be the outcome of the myth. Played onto the stage of Athenian policy Typhon is no longer the barbarian but a copy of the self. Ambivalence at this midpoint in the series of shields, which holds in balance external and internal war, heightens the tension of Eteokles' choice of interpretation and the sort of 'justice' that it leads to. In the real world, Athenian spectators too may have found in Aiskhylos' representation of the images of Zeus and Typhon the ambivalence of defence against a foreign enemy overlaid with aggression toward an ally.

[126] Cf. Steiner (1994) 54.

[127] Vidal-Naquet (1988) 291–2.

[128] Hall (1989) 53 notes the inclusion in the fifth century of barbarians to "the archaic world's ranks of divine, supernatural, and inhuman antagonists of civilization".

[129] Parker (1987) 193.

The verbs and their moods which the Khoros use reflect but do not quite match the rising confidence of Eteokles. The hope for god-given (θεοὶ δοῖεν, 418) success to Tydeus' opponent is underscored by the Khoros' real fear (τρέμω, 419). Against Kapaneus they are emboldened to wish for the antagonist's death (ὄλοιθ', 452) and for the thunderbolt to restrain him (ἐπισχέθοι, 453). The indicative ἐπεύχομαι (481) "I pray" expresses greater confidence in the realisation of success to Megareus, backed up by hope in Zeus the Avenger (485). But in the defeat of Hippomedon they assert their belief (πέποιθά, 521). As with Eteokles the fourth shield marks the peak of their confidence. The next shield-device with its pointed reference through another monster, the Sphinx, to the royal house of Thebes sets in motion the decline in confidence which accompanies increasingly explicit concerns with δίκη (justice).

Fifth shield: Parthenopaios at the Borraiai gate (Plates 1.v.a and 1.v.b)

Ἄγγ. τὸ γὰρ πόλεως ὄνειδος ἐν χαλκηλάτῳ
σάκει, κυκλωτῷ σώματος προβλήματι,
Σφίγγ' ὠμόσιτον προσμεμηχανημένην
γόμφοις ἐνώμα, λαμπρὸν ἔκκρουστον δέμας,
φέρει δ' ὑφ' αὐτῇ φῶτα, Καδμείων ἕνα,
ὡς πλεῖστ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ τῷδ' ἰάπτεσθαι βέλη. (539–44)

Mess. For on his shield of beaten bronze, a rounded screen
for his body,
he was wielding the reproach of the city,
the Sphinx that ate men raw, cunningly fastened
with bolts, a shining, embossed form,
and beneath her she carries a man, one of the Kadmeians,
so that at this man most of our missiles are shot.

Ἐτ. οὐδ' εἰσαμεῖψαι θηρὸς ἐχθίστου δάκος
εἰκὼ φέροντα πολεμίας ἐπ' ἀσπίδος
ἔξωθεν εἴσω. τῷ φέροντι μέμψεται
πυκνοῦ κροτησμοῦ τυγχάνουσ' ὑπὸ πτόλιν. (558–61)

Et. Nor that the bite of the most hated beast should enter
with one carrying her likeness on his enemy shield
from outside within. She shall find fault with the one
who carries her
when she suffers relentless hammering beneath the city wall.

No sooner does Eteokles name Zeus as the saviour of Hyperbios than the Messenger announces the fifth warrior who, in the spirit of Kapaneus, swears "to destroy the city of the Kadmeians in spite of

Zeus" (531–2).[130] This time both the city and the god are named in a particularising of Kapaneus' more general 'god' and 'city' (427). Not only does the fifth warrior deprecate the most powerful god, Zeus, but also, as Tucker calls them, "the most precious possession", the eyes (529–30).[131] His singular reliance on the spear places him outside the influence of god or man. Like Typhon he is a hybrid, neither child nor man (533), neither Argive nor Theban (548), a maid in name but at heart a savage (535–6), careless of eyes for seeing but with a gorgon eye to terrify (537).[132]

The images of the eyes look back to the eye of night on Tydeus' shield-device and the interpretation of Eteokles, which finds artistic representation in the Kadmeian man on Parthenopaios' shield-device. Appropriately, his device depicts a monster as savage (ὠμόσιτον, 541) as himself.[133] The Sphinx too is a hybrid, a mixture of the feminine and the bestial.[134] As a shield-device in vase paintings, the Sphinx, Chase observes, falls into the terrible class of such devices, designed to instil panic in the enemy.[135] The image on the shield of Parthenopaios of the Sphinx carrying a Kadmeian man under her (φέρει δ' ὑφ' αὑτῇ φῶτα, 543) is reminiscent of the Attic black-figured lekythoi of the Haimon painter, dating from 490 BC.[136] In these, however, the man is under the control of the Sphinx but is not actually being carried. Closer to the description by Aiskhylos, which is made even clearer by Euripides

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[130] I have followed the text of Tucker (1908) 518–9, Page (1972) 531–2, and Hutchinson (1985) 531–2 in reading βίᾳ/Διός rather than βίᾳ/Ἄρεως in West (1990a) 531–2.

[131] Tucker (1908) at line 516 f.

[132] The gorgon eye brings a concreteness to the terror imparted by Parthenopaios. This is a progression from Hippomedon φόβον βλέπων (498) "with a look to terrify", a "terror" which is itself personified two lines later (Φόβος, 500). For the spectators, images of the gorgon may be familiar from their frequent representation in art on the shield of Athene (Chase [1902] 84 n. 2).

[133] The savagery of Parthenopaios registered by ὠμόν (536), is echoed not only in the description of the Sphinx (541), but also in Eteokles' ὠμοδακής…ἵμερος (692) "savage-biting desire" to kill his brother, as well as in the ὠμόφρων Σίδαρος (730) "savage-hearted Iron", which is the mutually shared inheritance of the brothers. For the extreme of such savagery cf. *Il.* 4.35, 24.212–3; E. *Ba.* 338; S. *Ai.* 931; S. *Tr.* 975.

[134] Vidal-Naquet (1988) 292. The dominance of the Sphinx and *Dike* on the "right" side of his pediment schema leads Vidal-Naquet to associate this side with gynocracy.

[135] Chase (1902) 84. In Simon (1976) we also find the Sphinx represented on the cheek piece of Akhilleus (Plate XLII, Beazley no. 211565) and the helmet of Athene (Plate 163, Beazley no. 205162).

[136] See Haspels (1936) 130–1, 241; Boardman (1974) Fig. 273; Moret (1984) vol. 2, cat. 10–12, Beazley no. 460.

(*Phoinissai* 809), is the representation on a red-figured lekythos from around 470 BC featured by Moret.[137] Where Aiskhylos embellishes the iconography of the vase paintings is in the suggestion that the Sphinx devours her victims. "Jamais," claims Moret, "dans la peinture de vases, on ne voit la Sphinx faire le moindre mal à la 'proie' dont elle s'est saisie".[138] When the Khoros later sing of the fateful history of the Labdakid family they revert to the image of the Sphinx familiar in the iconography, ἁρπαξάνδραν (776) "snatching men away". The Sphinx on the shield-device is an image to reawaken the memory—in the minds of the Messenger, Eteokles, the Khoros, and the spectators—of the mixed blessing that she brought to Thebes in the person of Oidipous. He rid the land of her ravages (777) but left as a malevolent legacy to his sons καμψίπους Ἐρινύς (791) "swift-footed Fury". The Messenger draws attention to this communal memory when he calls the device on the shield τὸ…πόλεως ὄνειδος (539) "the reproach of the city".

There is also an animation to this Sphinx, προσμεμηχανημένην/γόμφοις (541–2) "cunningly fastened with bolts",[139] which makes of her an agent of the present moment and gives to her the sort of immediacy which metaphor gives to language. Aristotle might call it ἐνέργεια,[140] "actuality". Indeed, the third, fourth and fifth shield seem to outdo each other in their craftsmanship, until this possibly movable Sphinx (ἐνώμα, 542) represents a hijacking of the Theban cause, and its own man held as hostage. All the shield-devices are dynamic mental images in the sense that they encourage a restructuring of a problem, or in the words of Paivio and Clark are "symbolic representation[s]…of transformations".[141] All the shield-devices are also dynamic images in that they denote activity: the full moon shines forth (πρέπει, 390); the torch burns (φλέγει, 433) and the naked man speaks (φωνεῖ, 434); the hoplite climbs up (προσαμβάσεις/στείχει, 466–7) and shouts (βοᾷ,

137 Moret (1984) vol. 2, cat. 25, Beazley no. 28158. For his discussion, see vol. 1, 23–24. Although he cites Euripides at p. 23, he does not associate the earlier, Aiskhylean description with this vase painting which is so close in time to the production of the *Seven*.

138 Moret (1984) vol. 1, 15 and n. 2.

139 See the comments of Tucker (1908) at line 528 ff., and Hutchinson (1985) at line 541 f. Cf. Zeitlin (1982) 105 n. 88. Steiner (2001) 29 remarks on the "miracle of motion" which is privileged in the descriptions of the shields of Akhilleus and Herakles.

140 *Rh.* 1411b22–1412a10.

141 Paivio and Clark (1991) 224, and on dynamic images see above in Introduction, section III, *Image, word and thinking*, Static and dynamic images.

468); Typhon sends forth (ἱέντα, 493) his fiery breath and there is a coiling of snakes (ὄφεων δὲ πλεκτάνησι, 495) around the rim of the shield. The 'movement' of the Sphinx, however, brings the dynamism of the shield-device images to a new height of provocation and threat. If the shield of Eteoklos represented a doubling between shield-device and shield-bearer, the Kadmeian on the device of Parthenopaios suggests a duplicity not with its bearer but with its opponent; in attacking Parthenopaios, the Messenger concludes (544), the Thebans are attacking a Theban.[142] Καδμείων ἕνα (543) "one of the Kadmeians" serves the function of the part for the whole, as well as anticipating the internecine conflict of Kadmeian against Kadmeian at the seventh gate.

In interpreting the shield-device of Parthenopaios in this way, the Messenger imposes a meaning in addition to the general topic of such devices as vehicles for expressing the boastful hubris of the attacking warriors. He provides a specific topic—ὡς πλεῖστ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ τῷδ' ἰάπτεσθαι βέλη (544) "so that at this man most of our missiles are shot"—a non-literal verbal sign with an abstract reference which also resolves the literal visual sign with a concrete reference which is the σῆμα (shield-device).[143] The abstract reference of the topic to Thebans killing their own creates a surprising, but to the spectators, comprehensible metaphor. Eteokles takes up the Messenger's topic image and transfers the attack away from the man and onto the Sphinx (πυκνοῦ κροτησμοῦ τυγχάνουσ', 561, "when she suffers relentless hammering").[144] This can be seen as an attempt to salvage the iconography of external war denoted by Typhon on the previous shield. But even

[142] For discussion as to the identity of ἀνδρὶ τῷδ' ("this man") in line 544 see Verrall (1887) at line 530, Tucker (1908) at line 531, Hutchinson (1985) at line 544. I have adopted Hutchinson's interpretation.

[143] On the literal/non-literal tension see Figure 3 and discussion above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Comprehension of metaphor.

[144] If, as Tucker (1908) at line 531 proposes, ἀνδρὶ τῷδ' ("this man") in line 544 refers only to Parthenopaios, this distinction in emphasis between the Messenger's interpretation of the shield-device and that of Eteokles would be missed. At line 561 Eteokles would be merely endorsing the point that Parthenopaios' shield-device attracts a lot of opposition. This is not to say that the extreme insult of Parthenopaios' shield-device to the Thebans does not do this, but that if we allow the ambiguity in the Messenger's interpretation to stand, then the image can convey the situation more accurately. The Thebans are not involved simply in an external war but in one against themselves, and the more force they bring against their so-called foreign enemy the more force they bring against themselves.

without reference to the Kadmeian man a representation of the Sphinx cannot be impartial to Thebes or to Eteokles' family. Although the evidence is from later periods there are artistic and literary connections made between the Sphinx and the Erinys,[145] and if the shield-device appropriate to Eteokles is the Erinys, as Bacon argues, the image of the Sphinx may be understood by the spectators as a precursor to Eteokles' own emblem.[146]

Eteokles next maps the battering of the Sphinx by the Kadmeians onto the censure she will deal to the bearer of the shield, Parthenopaios. τῷ φέροντι (560) "The bearer" echoes the language of the successful correspondence Eteokles made in response to the first shield (404). His response to the fifth shield, however, lacks a literal visual sign with a concrete reference to the death of the bearer. The "tension between the literal and non-literal interpretation" of the mapping is not fully resolved and will lead to only partial comprehension on the part of the spectators.[147] If we add to this the concrete reference to death in the Kadmeian man, who in the Messenger's interpretation is a shield for the Sphinx who carries him (φέρει, 543), as well as Eteokles' omission of this aspect of the imagery of the shield-device from his own response, then the spectators may suspect that Eteokles' attempt to find an effective counter-image is flawed. Further, without the fitting image he undermines his metaphor for δίκη as fitting retribution. With the dichotomy of attacker and defender no longer clear cut, this shield-device prepares the spectators for the more complex turn justice is taking.

There are other indications of Eteokles' inability to think through the images of this device and to overcome his intimidation by them with a *productive* solution that is not a 'mechanical response' to the problem.[148] He confuses appearance and reality: he calls the Sphinx an image (εἰκὼ, 559) yet he also invests it with the intelligence to

[145] For the connection between Sphinx and Erinys see Moret (1984) vol. 1, 97 n. 3; in vol. 2, Plate 67/1 (cat. 108) shows a krater (340/330 BC) with the three figures, Oidipous, the Sphinx and the Erinys together. Moret notes that in Euripides, *Phoinissai* 1029, "la Sphinx elle-même est appelée Erinye".

[146] Bacon (1964) 34–5.

[147] See Helstrup (1988b) 81.

[148] On *productive* problem solving see Figure 1 and discussion above in Introduction, section III, *Image and word*. On the 'mechanical response' that can lead to error see Antonietti (1991) 213–6 and above in Introduction, section III, *Image, word and thinking*, Static and dynamic images.

apportion blame (μέμψεται, 560). He characterises the Sphinx by its bite (δάκος, 558) whereas earlier he had asserted that without the spear military accoutrements had no bite (οὐ δάκνουσ', 399). His affiliation with the Sphinx through this very characteristic is later underlined by the Khoros when they call his own desire ὠμοδακής...ἄγαν (692) "excessively savage-biting".

Eteokles appoints the unboasting man of action Aktor to protect the city by preserving the distinction between outside and inside: οὐκ ἐάσει.../εἴσω.../οὐδ' εἰσαμεῖψαι.../ἔξωθεν εἴσω (556–60) "He shall not allow...within...nor to enter...from outside within". Yet Eteokles fails to acknowledge and address the problem that this distinction has already been breached by the Kadmeian who is outside the walls on Parthenopaios' shield-device, a visual cue to the exclusion from the city of an actual Kadmeian in his brother Polyneikes.

Eteokles' response to the shield-device shows a confusion over friend and foe: he neglects the Kadmeian man and makes an ally of the Sphinx (the enemy of my enemy is my friend). He also confuses past and present: the Sphinx represents a problem which belonged to his father's generation, whereas it is the Kadmeian man who represents the present problem of the war against his brother. Again, by focusing on the image of the Sphinx Eteokles builds an image base from which to move to the inter-generational problem image of the Erinys. Eteokles has become entrapped by the anomaly of Parthenopaios, and registers his own uncertainty about the truth of his interpretation of the shield-device (562).

The Khoros make no mention of the images on Parthenopaios' shield-device or of Eteokles' interpretation. Rather, they pick up on the fear of the λόγος ("word"). The verbal reasoning which consolidated their confidence in the pairing of Zeus and Typhon and which gave control of the enemy emblems dissipates in physiological reaction: ἱκνεῖται λόγος διὰ στηθέων, /τριχὸς δ' ὀρθίας πλόκαμος ἵσταται (563–4) "The word goes through my breast, and the hair of my head stands on end". With Eteokles (562) they put their hope in the gods (566–7).

At the fifth gate the spectators have seen correspondences between a shield-device and its interpretation that are imprecise, unconvincing and uncomfortably redolent of the unresolved issues of the house of Oidipous. This failure on Eteokles' part is also a signal that the situation is demanding something other than the counter-images which represent his notion of justice as fitting retribution. The traditional

dichotomies of inside and outside, enemy and friend, past and present, appearance and reality have assumed the ambiguities that attend internal conflict. As Eteokles falters in his 'reasoning through images', Aiskhylos offers a way forward when, at the sixth gate, he introduces one who is an expert in interpreting images and signs, the seer with his image-less shield.

Sixth shield: Amphiareos at the Homoloian gate (Plate 1.vi)

῎Αγγ. τοιαῦθ' ὁ μάντις ἀσπίδ' εὔκηλος νέμων
πάγχαλκον ηὔδα. σῆμα δ' οὐκ ἐπῆν κύκλῳ·
οὐ γὰρ δοκεῖν ἄριστος ἀλλ' εἶναι θέλει,
βαθεῖαν ἄλοκα διὰ φρενὸς καρπούμενος,
ἐξ ἧς τὰ κεδνὰ βλαστάνει βουλεύματα. (590–4)

Mess. Such things the prophet spoke handling at his ease
his all-brasen shield. There was no shield-device in its circle;
for he wishes not to seem but to be best,
reaping his crop through the deep furrow of his mind
from which shoot good counsels.

'Ετ. φεῦ τοῦ ξυναλλάσσοντος ὄρνιθος βροτοῖς
δίκαιον ἄνδρα τοῖσι δυσσεβεστέροις.
ἐν παντὶ πράγει δ' ἔσθ' ὁμιλίας κακῆς
κάκιον οὐδέν, καρπὸς οὐ κομιστέος·
ἄτης ἄρουρα θάνατον ἐκκαρπίζεται. (597–601)

Et. Alas for the chance among mortals which brings together
a righteous man with those more impious.
In every affair there is no greater evil than bad company,
no fruit to be gathered;
ruin's tillage yields death as its crop.

The Messenger's account of Amphiareos' modesty and excellence (σωφρονέστατον, /...ἄριστον, 568–9), his knowledge of his own death and burial on foreign land (587–8), his shield without an emblem which he holds at his ease, all set the seer apart from the hyperactivity, self-projection, and loud boasting of the first five warriors at the gates. Amphiareos seems an endorsement of Eteokles and the courageous and modest Theban warriors (for the most part also unheralded by a shield-device) who have been assigned in opposition.

Amphiareos is also distinct from the other Argive warriors in that the Messenger represents him not through images of his physical characteristics and of his shield-device, or through his reported boasts,

but through his reported (βάζει, 571; καλεῖ, 579) and direct speech (580–9). If Eteokles fails to interpret the Sphinx and the Kadmeian man as an image which conclusively reconceptualises the problem as one of internal war, Amphiareos clearly understands the issue. His verbal interpretation builds, for the spectators, on the succession of shield images. This is consistent with Kaufmann's theory which places the use of imagery in the "initial phase" of solving a problem, after which the verbal system will have precedence.[149] Although Eteokles is reluctant to acknowledge the nature of the war, and this is reflected in his inability to find the fitting imagistic response, the spectators, following the images and knowing the myth, may be under no such misconception. At the sixth gate and in the words of Amphiareos, Aiskhylos makes clear both the nature of the war and the difficulty of applying justice to it. Apart from his reports of images of direct speech in the writing on the shield-devices of Kapaneus and Polyneikes, the Messenger's report of Amphiareos is singular in including his direct speech. It is, then, significant that the first seven (580–6) of his ten lines are devoted to questioning the justice of internal war from the point of view of Polyneikes' attack on his native city (πόλιν πατρῴαν, 582).

The use of direct speech points to an evaluative technique used by Aiskhylos to highlight this move away from the sort of justice defined by Eteokles' image system. Labov and Waletzky place "direct statement" first in their list of ways to convey an evaluation.[150] This evaluation in the mouth of Amphiareos is only a part of a series of evaluations by the Messenger and Eteokles broadly concerning the best defence to provide for the city, but it is a particularly significant evaluation. It comes from the enemy and from one whose only hope from his involvement is a "not dishonourable death" (οὐκ ἄτιμον…μόρον, 589). It comes directly after the most explicit image evocation of the complication of the story in the fifth shield-device, and it formulates a problem verbally, in direct speech, which up to this point has been experienced by the spectators emotionally and cognitively though images. Amphiareos' evaluation, however, is based on only one side of the issue, that of Polyneikes. A true evaluation of the justice of this war will consider both sides. Nevertheless, it is Amphiareos' concerns with

[149] Kaufmann (1988) 235–7, and see above in Introduction, section III, *Image, word and thinking*, Novelty and conflict.

[150] Labov and Waletzky (1967) 37.

Polyneikes which lead the spectators' thoughts inevitably to Eteokles and to both sides of the issue.

This process begins with Amphiareos' rebuke of Tydeus (571–5), the first of his speeches reported by the Messenger. The rebuke is apparently for Tydeus' arrogant disregard of unpropitious sacrifices (379) and it recaptures for the spectators the scene of the first shield. Reference to the Erinys (574), although in the context of Tydeus' evil doing, may also recall the Erinys of the house of Oidipous (70), particularly in association with the Sphinx of the previous shield-device. The next object of Amphiareos' anger closes the circle of shields with anticipation of the final one, that of Polyneikes, whom the Messenger announces through his relationship with Eteokles (τὸν σὸν ... ἀδελφεόν, 576, "your own brother").[151] Amphiareos emphasises Polyneikes' name as a signifier of his character (577–8). Yet the doubling and division of the name,[152] following so closely on the reference to his relationship with Eteokles, tends also to include the two brothers; after their deaths the Khoros will sing of this mutual identity: οἳ δῆτ' ὀρθῶς κατ' ἐπωνυμίαν/ἐτεοκλειεῖς καὶ πολυνεικεῖς/ὤλοντ' ἀσεβεῖ διανοίᾳ (829–31) "They who, rightly indeed according to their name, true-famed and much-quarrelling, perished by their godless purpose".

In questioning the justice which motivates Polyneikes, Amphiareos further implicates Eteokles:[153] μητρός τε πηγὴν τίς κατασβέσει δίκη, /πατρίς τε γαῖα σῆς ὑπὸ σπουδῆς δορὶ/ἁλοῦσα πῶς σοι ξύμμαχος γενήσεται; (584–6) "What justice will dry up a mother's spring, and your fatherland conquered by the spear through your zeal—how shall it become an ally to you?". Amphiareos' allusion to μητρός τε πηγὴν ("a mother's spring") and πατρίς τε γαῖα σῆς ("your fatherland") emphasises the familial basis of the conflict and its inherent contradiction. How can an ally arise from such violence against one's own? In his defence against the shield-devices Eteokles created allies by manipulating the shield images: night, thunderbolt, warrior, Zeus and Sphinx. The last of these, like the fatherland for Polyneikes, is a

[151] Both here and, more elaborately, at the fifth gate the Messenger delays naming a warrior. The naming of Parthenopaios provides a denouement to the foregoing description. The naming of Polyneikes sends a shudder of expectation.

[152] For a discussion of the semiotics of this passage see Zeitlin (1982) 133–4.

[153] Later Eteokles is to label Δίκη ("Justice"), who accompanies Polyneikes, as ψευδώνυμος (670) "false-named".

dubious ally. The words of Amphiareos reported by the Messenger inadvertently associate the brothers through their mutual straining of the essence of justice. Amphiareos is not talking of justice in its logical sense of fittedness but in its ethical sense of what is right. The seer with his round all-bronze shield has held a mirror up to the situation. It reflects back the hubris of Tydeus and Polyneikes. It creates a new challenge for Eteokles. Since there is no device whose image he can manipulate Eteokles' defence centres on what the shield signifies, not on its appearance but on the reality behind, βαθεῖαν ἄλοκα…φρενὸς (593) "the deep furrow of his mind".[154]

In the Messenger's interpretation (592–4), the shield of Amphiareos is a metaphor for the seer's productive mind. This, the topic of the metaphor, makes a remarkable contrast with the previous shield-devices as metaphors for aggression and boastfulness. A new level of response, less centred on sounds and sights and more concerned with ethical values is put in place. The imagery from agriculture and harvesting recalls the metaphor for the shield of Hippomedon, ἅλων…πολλήν (489) "a great threshing-floor", an apt image also for the shield of a seer who can sift what seems best from what is best (592). Eteokles' defence is to subvert the imagery of fruitfulness (καρπούμενος, 593; cf. καρπὸς, 600; ἐκκαρπίζεται, 601;[155] καρπὸς, 618). The deep furrow of his mind (593) becomes ἄτης ἄρουρα (601) "ruin's tillage", from which shoots up not good counsels (594) but death (601). The tension between the literal and the non-literal in this metaphor appears to resolve itself: the shield of Amphiareos is first a cue to his fruitful mind and then to the fruitlessness of a death which he himself forecasts (587–8). But Eteokles does not address the fact that the good counsels of Amphiareos, instanced by his questioning in direct speech the justice of this war, are fruitful whether he lives or dies. μητρός τε πηγὴν τίς κατασβέσει δίκη (584) "What justice will dry up a mother's spring?" is a universal question. As with his response to the fifth shield-device, Eteokles is selective, carefully avoiding the reference in image and word to internal war. The spectators, on the other hand, have the problem clearly formulated and await the outcome of Eteokles' evasions. For the spectators, there is the further irony of Eteokles' foreshadowing of

[154] Cf. Steiner (1994) 57.
[155] West (1990a) square brackets this line.

his own death. The deep furrow (593) which he restructures as ἄτης ἄρουρα (601) "ruin's tillage" is an image which resonates with the polluted marriage of Oidipous and Iocasta, and its crop, with the deaths of their sons.[156]

The reaping of death, Eteokles claims, is the lot of the just man whom chance casts among the impious (597–8). He examines this generalisation in the light of a sailor and a citizen before narrowing his point to Amphiareos. He is σώφρων δίκαιος ἀγαθὸς εὐσεβὴς (610) "prudent, just, brave, reverent" but bad company will bring him punishment that is not his due (ἐκδίκως, 607).[157] Eteokles has found a match for the fruitfulness of the seer's mind in the fruitless death which will befall him. Yet in lauding the ethical qualities which make him a just man Eteokles does not deflect this abstract sense of justice which the unadorned shield represents. Indeed he seems to ally himself with the 'just man' caught in the wrong group. The preposition and prefix σύν, which dominate Eteokles' language here,[158] are suggestive of the perverse mixing in his own background. Eteokles has opposed the shield of Amphiareos with no more than the seer had already established. But the shield has drawn from Eteokles a redefining of justice (in the form of the just man) which moves the imagery of the shield-devices a step further in the direction of the ethical issues which will be raised by Polyneikes' shield-device and Eteokles' confrontation with it.

Against the shield of Amphiareos which is all-eye Eteokles appoints the ποδῶκες ὄμμα (623) "swift-footed eye" of Lasthenes, a warrior who

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[156] The Khoros sing of these themes in response to Eteokles' decision to meet his brother. One wonders if similar themes and imagery had not already been raised in the previous plays of the trilogy. Using the same metaphor of the tilled land (ἄρουρα) the Khoros sing of Oidipous and his marriage: ὅστε ματρὸς ἁγνὰν/σπείρας ἄρουραν ἵν' ἐτράφη, /ῥίζαν αἱματόεσσαν/ἔτλα· (753–6) "He who sowed the sacred tillage of his mother where he was bred, suffered a bloody root". The Khoros call the crop which Eteokles will reap πικρόκαρπον ἀνδροκτασίαν (693) "manslaying which bears bitter fruit", and in their final exchange with him they specify that crop precisely: ἀλλ' αὐτάδελφον αἷμα δρέψασθαι θέλεις; (718) "But are you willing to shed your own brother's blood?". Cf. Vidal-Naquet (1988) 294.

[157] I have followed the text of West (1990a) 607, Tucker (1908) 594, and Hutchinson (1985) 607 here, rather than ἐκδίκοις (607) in Page (1972). That the punishment is not 'fitted' to the just character of the innocent man seems to me consistent with the concept of δίκη ("justice") which Eteokles pursues in the play. As Tucker puts it: ἐκδίκως is not equivalent to ἀδίκως ("unjustly"), but is closer to "out of place".

[158] ξυναλλάσσοντος (597) "bringing together", ξυνεισβὰς (602) "going on board ship together", ξὺν (604, 605) "in company with", συμμιγείς (611) "mingling with", ξυγκαθελκυσθήσεται (614) "he will be dragged down together [with them]".

will not approach the shield directly but whose spear will catch any part of his opponent's body left "exposed beside the shield" (παρ' ἀσπίδος γυμνωθὲν, 624). Just as Eteokles omitted the Kadmeian man from the equation in devising his defence against the shield of Parthenopaios, here again Eteokles' capacity to match an opponent to the shield of Amphiareos is only partial. The shield is unmatchable.[159] Lasthenes must do his work from beside it. The Messenger and Eteokles each conclude with an aphorism:

Ἄγγ. δεινός, ὃς θεοὺς σέβει (596).
Mess. Fearful is he who revers the gods.

Ἐτ. θεοῦ δὲ δῶρόν ἐστιν εὐτυχεῖν βροτούς (625).
Et. Yet for mortals success is a gift of god.

Both reflect an opponent in Amphiareos who is outside the scope of their defences.

The Khoros (626–30) echo Eteokles, but put their trust not in the opponent Eteokles has appointed but in their own just prayers (δικαίους λιτὰς/ἁμετέρας, 626–7).[160] Unlike the Messenger, they, with the spectators, know that Eteokles has appointed himself as a defender of one of the seven gates (282–4) and there is only one left. The shield of Amphiareos brought with it the realisation that justice could dwell on either side of their city's walls, and the seer's reference to Polyneikes has highlighted the possibility that the brothers will meet each other. The Khoros thus avoid mention of a specific champion or opponent (as they did at the first to fourth gates), and appeal to the gods to apply Eteokles' defence by turning the spear-work back on the invaders en masse (ἐκτρέποντες.../ἐπιμόλους, 628–9). Their final plea to Zeus and his thunderbolt reverts to the imagery of Hyperbios' shield and the high point of their confidence. Yet here too they betray their anxiety when they call upon Zeus to act "from outside the walls" (πύργων...ἔκτοθεν, 629). By praying from the position of their own just cause as women inside a besieged city the Khoros underline that where a just personal alliance lies is no longer clear.[161]

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[159] See Fraenkel (1964) 320.

[160] Cf. 417–9, where, in response to the shield of Tydeus, the Khoros' confidence is lodged in the city's champion: τὸν ἁμόν νυν ἀντίπαλον εὐτυχεῖν/θεοὶ δοῖεν, ὡς δικαίως πόλεως/πρόμαχος ὄρνυται. "May the gods grant success then to our champion since justly does he set out fighting for our city".

[161] Cf. Eteokles' injunction to them that they pray that the gods be their allies (ξυμμάχους εἶναι θεούς, 266).

If the model of the just man caught in a situation that will earn him a justice that is "out of place" (ἐκδίκως, 607) applies to Eteokles, it also applies to Polyneikes. When Polyneikes himself is reported at the seventh gate he claims no more for himself than Eteokles has already claimed: that he will triumph over the city (634–5); that the gods will be on his side (639–41); that, should Eteokles and he live, Eteokles suffer the same banishment that he has (637–8). To their mutual deaths, which he also foresees (636), *Dike* will lead the one, Erinys the other. What Eteokles will discover at the seventh gate is that the principle of justice, of meticulously matching image with counter-image, which provided a successful defence against an external enemy is, when applied to your own kind, self-defeating. This is the *Dike* which has led him from gate to gate at the Messenger's direction, only for him to find that when he himself is part of the match she is leading the other side. Justice would seem to belong with both the brothers and with neither. In finding the right interpretation to each shield-device, Eteokles created his own metaphor for justice as something that is neatly fitted, an eye for an eye. The perfection of the metaphor arises at the seventh gate (674–5) except that it is no longer a metaphor for justice but for pollution (681–2; 734–7).

Seventh shield: Polyneikes at the seventh gate (Plates 1.vii.a and 1.vii.b)

Ἄγγ. ἔχει δὲ καινοπηγὲς εὔκυκλον σάκος
διπλοῦν τε σῆμα προσμεμηχανημένον·
χρυσήλατον γὰρ ἄνδρα τευχηστὴν ἰδεῖν
ἄγει γυνή τις σωφρόνως ἡγουμένη·
Δίκη δ' ἄρ' εἶναί φησιν, ὡς τὰ γράμματα
λέγει· "κατάξω δ' ἄνδρα τόνδε, καὶ πόλιν
ἕξει πατρῴιαν δωμάτων τ' ἐπιστροφάς". (642–8)

Mess. He holds a new-made, well-rounded shield
and two-fold is the device cunningly fastened upon it:
for wrought in gold is a man, visibly a warrior,
a woman leads him, prudently guiding him;
Justice then she claims to be, as the writing
says: "I will bring this man back, and his hereditary city
he shall have and the occupation of his house".

Ἐτ. ἐπωνύμῳ δὲ κάρτα, Πολυνείκει λέγω,
τάχ' εἰσόμεσθα τοὐπίσημ' ὅποι τελεῖ,
εἴ νιν κατάξει χρυσότευκτα γράμματα

ἐπ' ἀσπίδος φλύοντα σὺν φοίτῳ φρενῶν.
εἰ δ' ἡ Διὸς παῖς παρθένος Δίκη παρῆν
ἔργοις ἐκείνου καὶ φρεσίν, τάχ' ἂν τόδ' ἦν·
ἀλλ' οὔτέ νιν φυγόντα μητρόθεν σκότον
οὔτ' ἐν τροφῆσιν οὔτ' ἐφηβήσαντά πω
οὔτ' ἐν γενείου ξυλλογῇ τριχώματος
Δίκη προσεῖδε καὶ κατηξιώσατο·
οὐδ' ἐν πατρῴας μὴν χθονὸς κακουχίᾳ
οἶμαί νιν αὐτῷ νῦν παραστατεῖν πέλας.
ἦ δῆτ' ἂν εἴη πανδίκως ψευδώνυμος
Δίκη, ξυνοῦσα φωτὶ παντόλμῳ φρένας. (658–71)

Et. For him truly named, I mean Polyneikes,
soon we shall know the extent of his device,
whether the gold-wrought writing on his shield,
babbling with the wandering of his wits, will bring him back.
If the daughter of Zeus, the maid Justice, were present
in his deeds and in his mind this would perhaps happen.
But neither when he escaped the darkness of his mother's womb
nor in his nurture nor yet when he came to manhood
nor at the gathering of the hair of his chin
did Justice look at him and hold him in high esteem;
nor surely in the destruction of a fatherland
do I imagine that she now stands by close to him.
Truly then she would be in all justice a false-named
Justice uniting with a man utterly reckless in his purpose.

The Messenger's description of Polyneikes' shield-device creates a most vivid image for the spectators even though what it depicts is unlikely to have a precedent in art. At last 'justice', which has been encountered in its logical sense of fittedness and in its ethical sense as a human attribute, is personified as a woman. As the point to which the previous shield-devices were heading, the description here includes allusions to what has gone before. The shield is "well-rounded" (fourth, fifth and sixth shields); its διπλοῦν…σῆμα (643) "two-fold…device" is in harmony compared with antithetical emblems on other shields (Typhon and Zeus, Sphinx and Kadmeian man); προσμεμηχανημένον (643) "cunningly fastened" recalls the same word in the feminine in the same line position to describe the Sphinx (541); ἄνδρα τευχηστὴν (644) "a man a warrior" recalls the hoplite on the shield of Eteoklos as does Polyneikes' desire to climb up the towers (πύργοις ἐπεμβὰς, 634); σωφρόνως (645) "prudently", the seer who is σώφρων (610) "prudent"; and the writing (647–8) recalls that on the shields of Kapaneus (434) and Eteoklos (469). Where the written message surprises is in its confident, but not boastful, claim to justice.

Eteokles' immediate response to the Messenger springs from the family context of the confrontation, and the curses of Oidipous which will work through the sons (653–5); but his most sustained attack is on the shield-device of Polyneikes. Such is its provocation that the shield-image dominates this speech and Eteokles' interpretation of it is by far the most detailed of any shield-device. The vehemence of his attack is proportional to the care with which, in his interpretations of the shield-devices, he had cultivated *Dike* for himself. Yet in a strategic inversion which matches his own capacity for defence, here she is modestly emblazoned on his brother's shield, his patron. Eteokles' position and the emblem that might have represented him have been usurped.[162] He is forced from the righteous position of defender into the role of aggressor.

He too uses the language and imagery of previous shields in his interpretation, although he restricts his allusions to Amphiareos and Parthenopaios, two types which represent for him the models into which he will fit himself and Polyneikes. Allusions to Amphiareos serve his own cause whereas *Dike* and Polyneikes are subsumed in the negative associations of Parthenopaios. Eteokles opens his attack with reference to Amphiareos' etymologising of Polyneikes' name, and against the seer's deep furrowed mind pits his brother's unstable and reckless wits (661, 671). Again he echoes the seer in questioning the justice of one who would attack his native land (582–3; 668–9). At the one point where Eteokles admits that there could be truth in the claim of the writing on the shield if "Justice were present in the deeds and in the mind" of his brother, he subverts the name of Justice through her title of παῖς παρθένος (662) transliterated "pais parthenos", an inversion of Parthenopaios.[163] His assertions about the absence of *Dike* in the life of Polyneikes all relate to stages before full maturity when a person's actions and mind could scarcely be a measure of the adult. But here too are echoes of the description of Parthenopaios (532–5) which concludes with the evaluation that he is false-named (536–7). The Messenger's report of Parthenopaios primes the spectators for Eteokles' parallel and predictable conclusion that the *Dike* who accompanies his brother is ψευδώνυμος (670) "false-named". In an attempt to reappropriate *Dike*, Eteokles announces the perfect match that he

[162] Cf. Zeitlin (1982) 144 n. 119.
[163] Cf. Zeitlin (1982) 104–5; 142–3.

is for his brother: τίς ἄλλος μᾶλλον ἐνδικώτερος; (673) "Who else has better right?".[164] His list of the three different categories in which they are fitted to each other (674–5) extends the implication of his rationale for standing against his brother (τούτοις πεποιθώς, 672, "trusting in this")—that, if he is protected by a false Justice, Eteokles himself can claim true Justice as his ally.[165]

Among the shield-devices, Eteokles found fitting opposites which were the same but different: the metaphoric night of death against the representation of literal night, the mythical fire of a god against the shield-fire of a man, real warrior against shield-warrior, shield-god against shield-divine monster. At the fifth gate the hybrid shield-sphinx is enlisted against the hybrid shield-bearer, and at the sixth, the just man is defeated by what is not his due. Now at the seventh gate, although two of Eteokles' categories involve natural antitheses, leader against leader and enemy against enemy, it is a contradiction to try to divide brothers or Justice herself. The fifth shield and its bearer demonstrate the savagery of the divided self which is inherent in the division of brothers;[166] and the sixth shield demonstrates that the just man is not brought down by division in himself but by suffering, beyond his due (ἐκδίκως, 607), the same punishments from the god as his impious associates received. The logic of Eteokles' approach has set like against like. Eteokles will either share true justice with his brother or share in a justice which is false-named. To accept that justice resides with both brothers is to approach the virtues embodied in Amphiareos, the ethical man who is prudent, just, brave and reverent (610). To accept that justice resides with neither reduces the conflict to the barbarous ethics of Parthenopaios, the man who swears by the spear (529).

In the play, *dike* and its related forms and compounds occur almost exclusively in the shield scene.[167] They increase in concentration at the sixth shield and reach their peak at the seventh. What happens to Eteokles' principle of justice, of the fittedness of things, which he has applied to the images presented by the Messenger, is that it evolves

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[164] Cf. Zeitlin (1982) 141.

[165] See Hutchinson (1985) at 672 f.

[166] Zeitlin (1982) 136 writes, "When brothers are the opponents, victory or defeat on either side constitutes the same event, 'the act of trespass over a forbidden boundary'".

[167] δίκη (415, 444, 584, 646, 662, 667, 671, 866 *); δίκαιος (418, 598, 605, 610, 626, 1071*, 1073*); ἔκδικος (607); ἔνδικος (405, 673); πάνδικος (171, 670). The four references underlined are not in the shield scene. Of these, the three with asterisks are probably interpolations; see Thalmann (1978) 137–41.

into a new metaphor, the Fury, an apt image for the destruction of brother by brother, or ally by ally. This is the true representation of the justice that binds the brothers and which will join them in the equal inheritance of a shared grave (785–800; 818–21). Whereas the vehicle for the metaphor of justice was the shield, a circle poised between attack and defence, the Fury is represented by the sword, the Skythian iron, which divides and destroys (728–30; 817). Eteokles' call for his armour signals his new understanding of the nature of the justice he has fashioned for himself.[168]

This new understanding is also signalled by the Khoros (677–82), who do not respond in lyrics as they have to the other shield-devices but in iambic trimeters.[169] The object of their concern is no longer themselves and the city but Eteokles. They are responding less to this last shield-device than to the whole system of devices which have redefined the nature of the conflict and the nature of justice. What began as a foreign war has concluded as an internal war; what began as a logical application of justice has ended as a contradiction. The hoplite on Polyneikes' shield is the double of the bearer and the opponent.

The series of shield-devices provides for the spectators not only a memorable cue which can trace the evolution of the internal war from its origins in defence against the foreigner but also a 'reasoning through imagery' which demonstrates some of the pitfalls of mapping one type of war onto the other. Through images of the shield-devices the spectators follow the mind of Eteokles as he constructs his notion of justice. They see him realising its perfection in the opposition of Zeus and Typhon and then they see the subversion of that perfection by images that restructure the problem. The fifth, sixth and seventh shields gradually reconstrue Eteokles' logical sense of justice manifested in the pairing of things that are the same but different and develop the complement of that sense of justice with the pairing of things that are different but the same. The Kadmeian man who is outside the walls on the shield of Parthenopaios, the just man who is the enemy, the enemy brother who claims justice for himself, are all images for Eteokles of what is different from himself but the same. He cannot solve his problem because he continues to apply a *reproductive* form of thinking

[168] Contrast Wiles (2007) 273 who argues that "when he arms himself, Eteocles effectively dons a mask that tells him what to do".

[169] Thalmann (1978) 94.

that does not respond impartially to the images presented to him.[170] By mapping a logical notion of justice, which applied to external war and was realised through image and counter-image, onto the domain of an ethical justice proper to internal conflict, he fails to construct images that are not antitheses or attempts at antitheses. The novel metaphor, the constructive reconceptualisation of the problem, is that which is cued by Polyneikes' shield-device, that is, that the *Dike* who leads Polyneikes is also the *Dike* who leads Eteokles. This is the image metaphor which is available to the spectators as a possible resolution to the series of shield-devices. The spatial congruence between vehicle and topic and the conceptual blend between them of reconciliation make an innovative message.[171]

As spectators at a play they are free to take the path of moderation; like Amphiareos they can reflect both sides; justice for them can be ethical and non-partisan.[172] Alternatively, and this is the path most powerfully presented in Eteokles' response through the image of the Fury, the ever diminishing concentric circles of aggressor and defender narrow to a point which can only be divided with mutual destruction.

The shield scene involves the spectators in the use of imagery in thinking. An object (ἐκεῖνο) with which they are familiar (προεωρακώς) and in which they take pleasure, the shield, refers to an object in the

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[170] Goward (1999) 72 notes a similar block in Eteokles' thinking. She writes: "Eteocles is revealed as no longer an authoritative narrator of the future but a puppet in another narrative fixed earlier". Like Wiles (2007) 273, however, Goward interprets Eteokles' *reproductive* thinking as a failure of agency.

[171] This is the sort of conceptual insight through the superimposing of one image upon another that we find Ruth making when she refuses to leave her mother-in-law Naomi (*Ruth* 1.16). Unlike Eteokles and Polyneikes, these women are not two of a kind but are Moabite and Hebrew. Ruth pursues a series of images which culminates in a matching of god with god: "Whither you go I shall go, and where you lodge I shall lodge, your people are my people, and your god my god". (אל אשר תלכי אלךְ ובאשר תליני אלין עמך עמי ואלהיך אלהי). Cf. Ozick (1989) 240–64 and her discussion of Ruth. See also Zeitlin (1986) 101–41 writing on the relationship of Thebes and Athens within dramatic performance. She writes: "Within the theater, Athens is not the tragic space. Rather it is the scene where theater can and does escape the tragic, and where reconciliation and transformation are made possible" (117).

[172] Plou. *Arist.* 3.5 reports that at the performance of the play the spectators identified lines 592–4, describing Amphiareos, as having special application to Aristeides. Whether or not a political reference is intended by Aiskhylos, Amphiareos is generic for the moderate man caught in conflict. For further discussion, see Podlecki (1966) 36–40.

present action of the play (τοῦτο), that is, the generic shield in the series of shield-devices. The correspondence carries the general inference of the shield as a weapon of defence and aggression. In the conflict situation in which Eteokles finds himself the shield serves as a conceptual peg on which he can build a comparison with the enemy shield-device and an anticipation relating to the defeat of the opposing warrior. To this end he reconstrues the eye of night as the night of the eye, the torch as the thunderbolt, the shield of the hoplite mounting the city wall as spoils of war, Typhon as Zeus. When the image of the fifth shield and the word of the sixth lead the problem in a direction for which Eteokles has no convincing metaphor, the spectators, nevertheless, are in a position to create the novel metaphor which could lead to a different solution from the solution of the Fury arrived at by Eteokles. The seventh shield-device provides the vehicle for an image metaphor that maps *Dike* onto *Dike*, Polyneikes onto Eteokles. A mapping of type onto type requires a radical reconceptualisation of the sort of justice which at its best fit realised the Zeus/Typhon antithesis of the fourth shield. The shield images in this scene are not random but are organised in such a way as to facilitate thought. They lead the spectators to two memorable perspectives on internal war, economised in two memorable images, uniting Justice or the dividing Fury.

For Athenian spectators in 467 the antithesis of Zeus and Typhon at the midpoint of the series of shield-devices may offer a parallel to their real world. Envisaged in the schema of Vidal-Naquet as the centre of a sculptured pediment,[173] this antithesis looks backward and forward in their history. Aligned with Zeus against the barbarian invader Athens looks backward to the peak of her success. Aligned with Zeus against his antitype, his equivalent—as in coins, the stamp is to the die—[174] Athens looks forward to the *stasis* of the Peloponnesian War. The Zeus/Typhon antithesis provides vivid shield images which can act simultaneously as the vehicle of a metaphor for defence against a foreign enemy and offence against an ally. The topic of this metaphor may be realised through a mapping of concept and image-shape from the ambivalence of the shield to the ambivalence of fortification in the play, or, in the real world, the fortification of Athens and the Peiraieus from 479.

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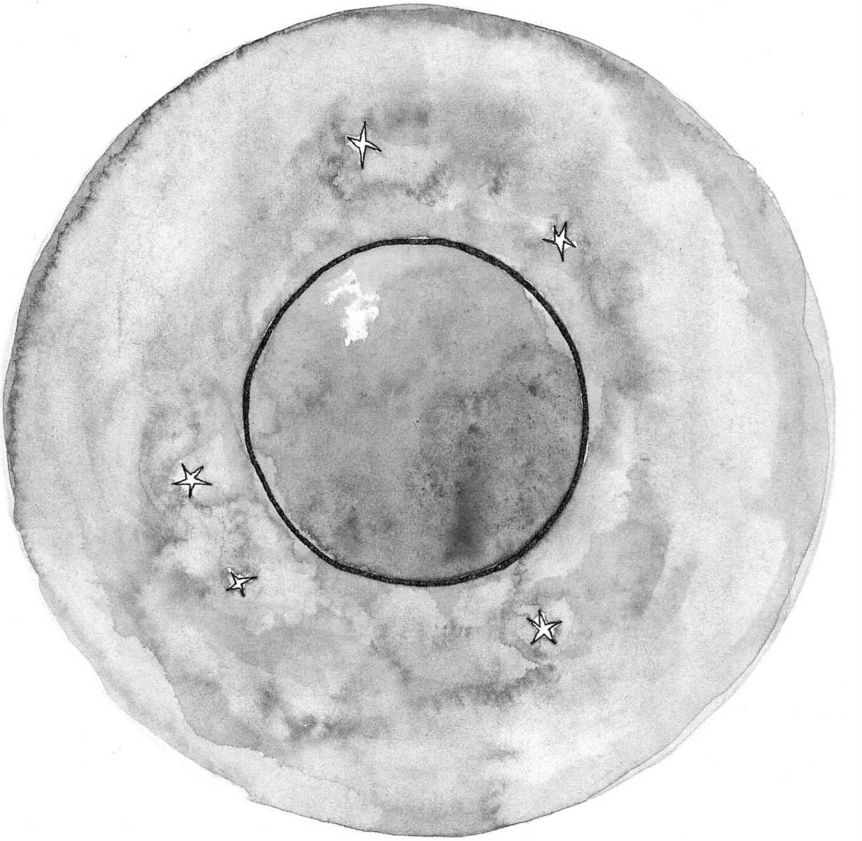
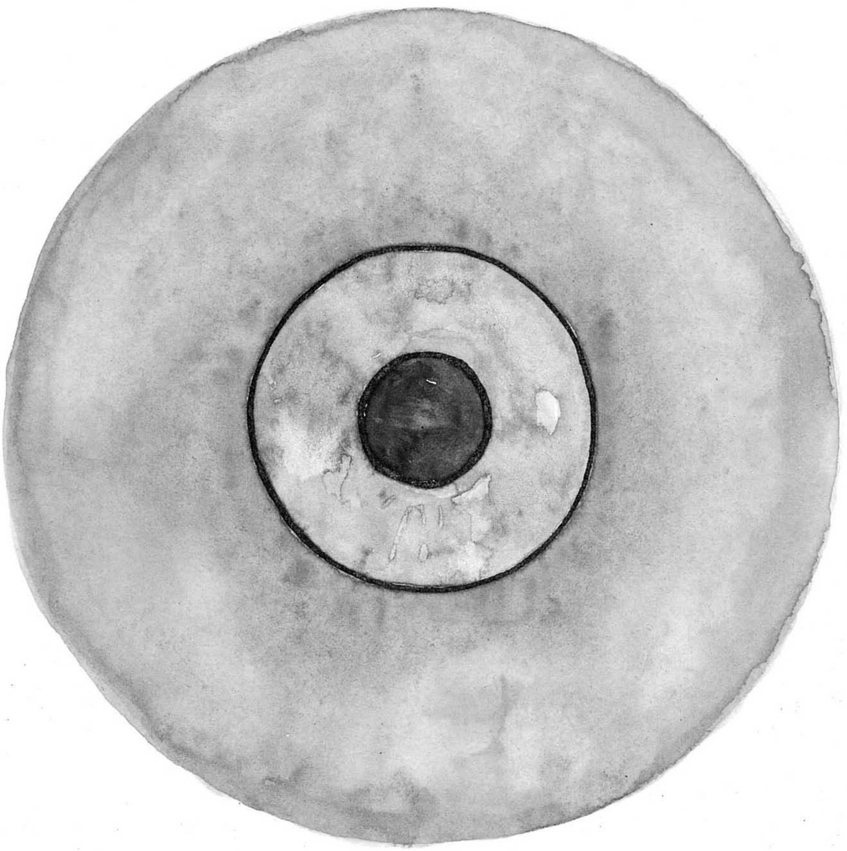
[173] For a pictorial representation see Vidal-Naquet (1988) 287, fig. 8.

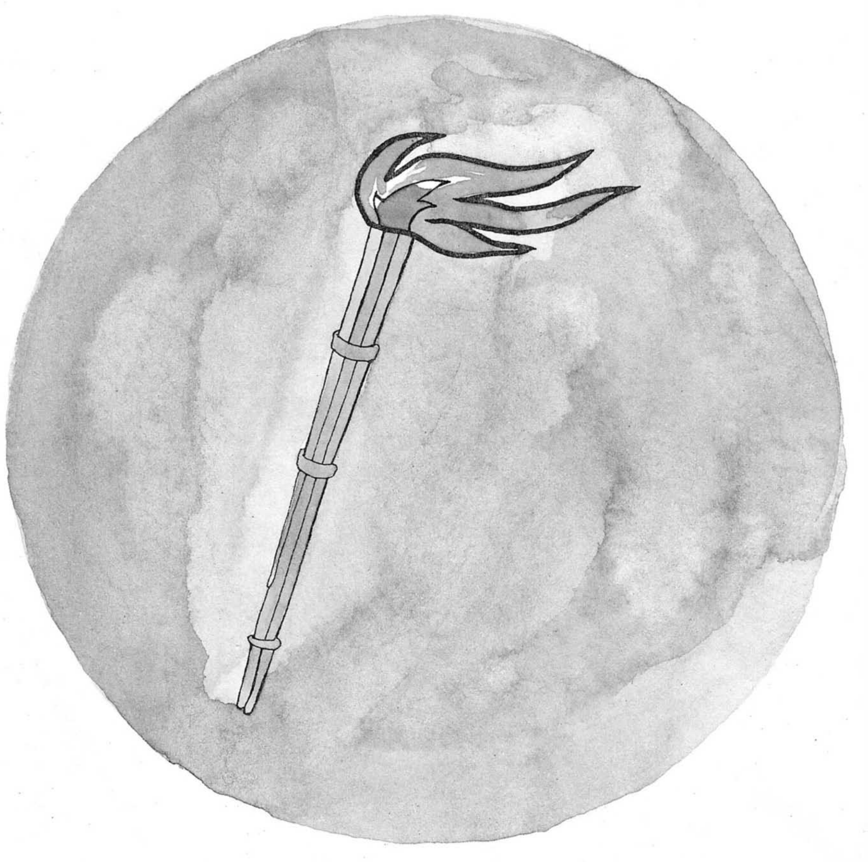
[174] Steiner (1994) 54.



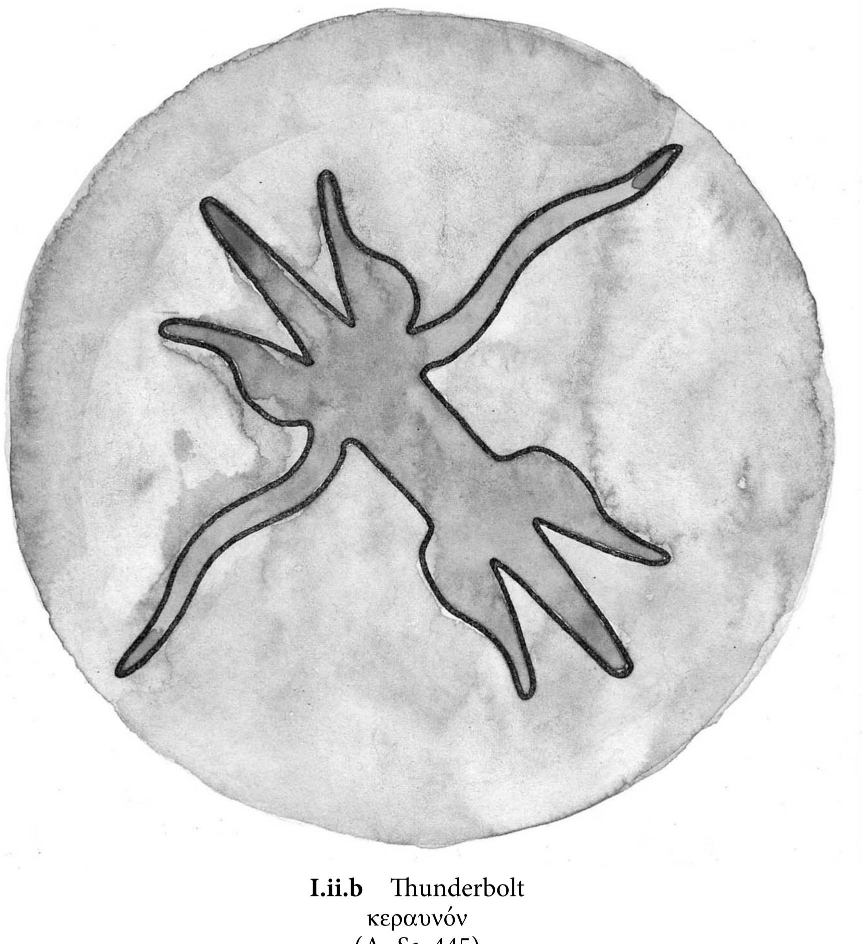
I.i.a Moon in night sky (the eye of night)
νυκτὸς ὀφθαλμός
(A. *Se.* 390)



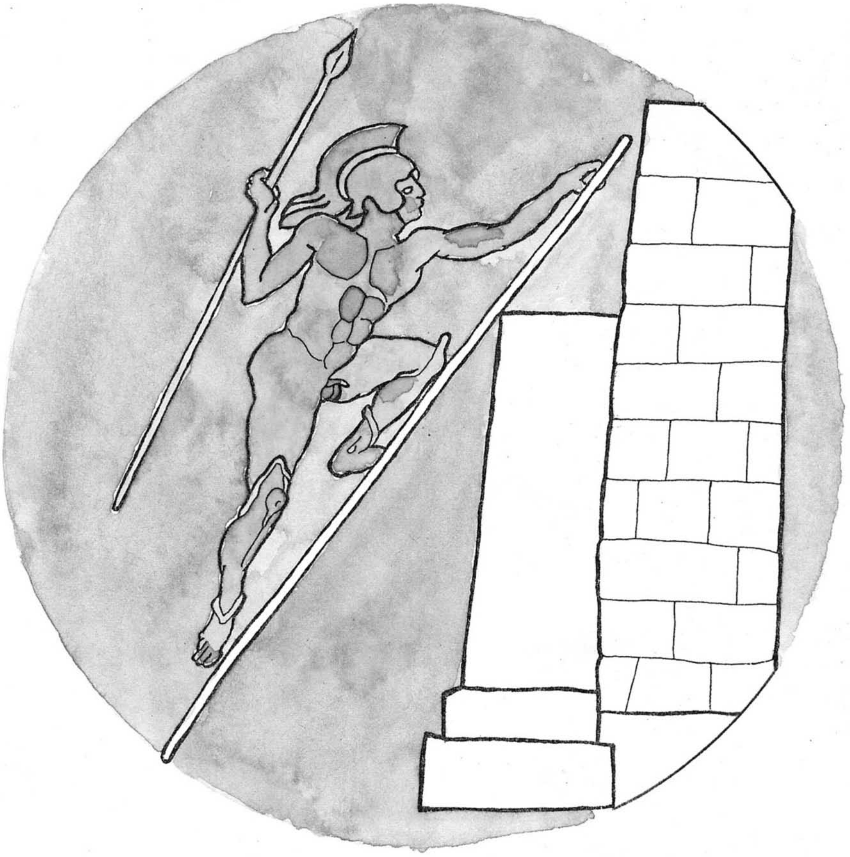
I.i.b Eye of dead man (night of the eye)
νὺξ ἐπ' ὄμμασιν πέσοι
(A. *Se.* 403)



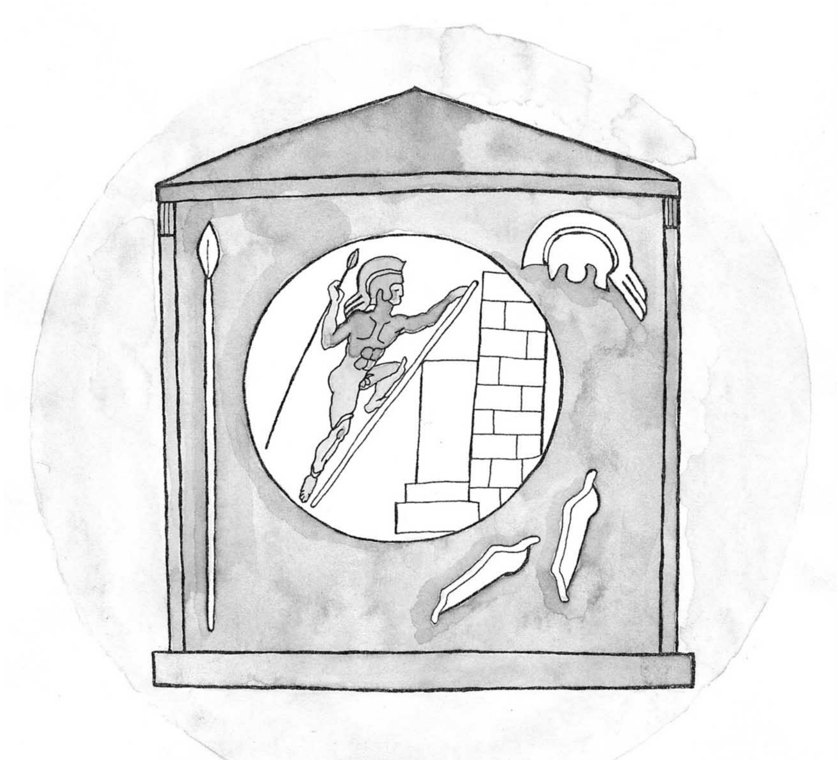
I.ii.a Torch
λαμπὰς
(A. *Se.* 433)



I.ii.b Thunderbolt
κεραυνόν
(A. *Se.* 445)



I.iii.a Hoplite scaling city wall
ἀνὴρ δ’ ὁπλίτης κλίμακος προσμβάσεις
στείχει πρὸς ἐχθρῶν πύργον, ἐκπέρσαι θέλων
(A. *Se*. 466–7)



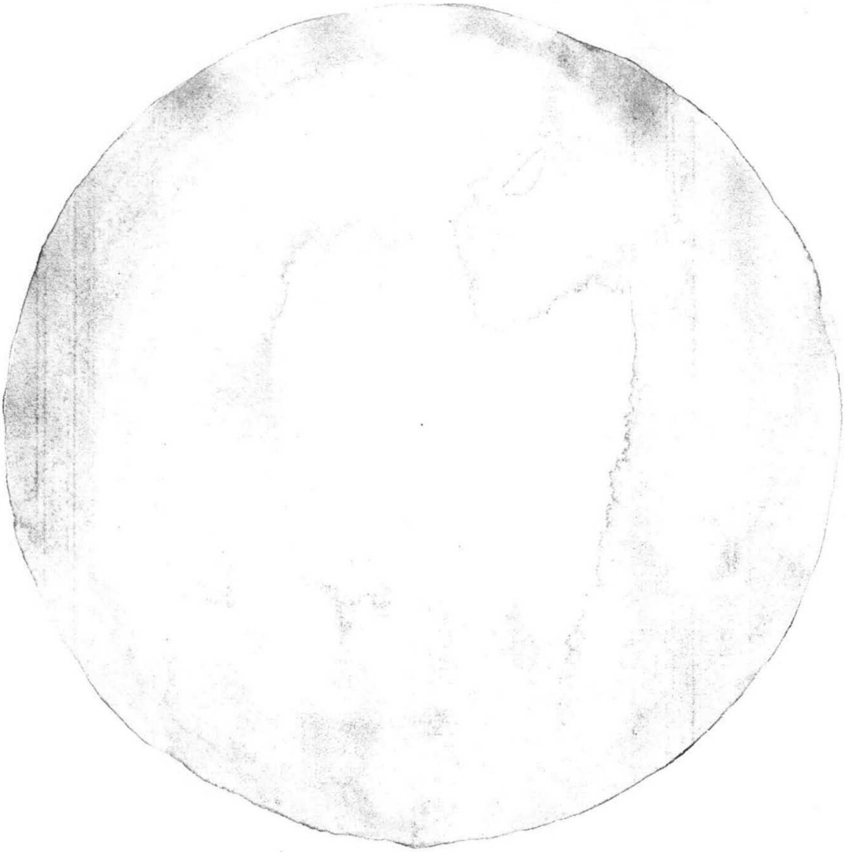
I.iii.b Spoils displayed on house wall
καὶ δύ' ἄνδρε καὶ πόλισμ' ἐπ' ἀσπίδος
ἑλὼν λαφύροις δῶμα κοσμήσει πατρός
(A. *Se*. 478–9)

I.iv.a Fire-breathing Typhon
Τυφῶν ἱέντα πυρπνόον διὰ στόμα
λιγνὺν μέλαιναν, αἰόλην πυρὸς κάσιν
(A. *Se.* 493–4)

I.iv.b Zeus and his flaming thunderbolt
Ζεὺς πατὴρ…
σταδαῖος ἧσται, διὰ χερὸς βέλος φλέγων
(A. *Se.* 512–3)

I.v.a Sphinx and Kadmeian man
Σφίγγ'…
φέρει δ' ὑφ' αὑτῇ φῶτα Καδμείων ἕνα
(A. *Se.* 541, 543)

I.v.b Reproachful sphinx
τῷ φέροντι μέμψεται
(A. *Se.* 560)



I.vi Shield without device
σῆμα δ' οὐκ ἐπῆν κύκλῳ
(A. *Se*. 591)

I.vii.a Dike leading Polyneikes
ἄνδρα τευχηστὴν…
ἄγει γυνή τις σωφρόνως ἡγουμένη·
Δίκη δ᾽ ἄρ᾽ εἶναί φησιν
(A. *Se.* 644–6)

I.viib The Fury
φίλου γὰρ ἐχθρά μοι πατρὸς τελεῖ ἀρά
μελάναιγις…
Ἐρινύς
(A. *Se*. 695, 699–700)

CHAPTER TWO

THE URN: SOPHOKLES, *ELEKTRA*

The shield scene in Aiskhylos' *Seven Against Thebes* has provided an example of a dramatic character whom the dramatist represents as using to some extent the cognitive functions of imagery—its comparisons and anticipations—to facilitate his reasoning about a problem that is novel and involves cognitive conflict. My discussion of the urn image in Sophokles' *Elektra*, on the other hand, has as its primary focus, the spectators' response to the reconstrual of image shape, the possible comparisons that they may make, and the anticipation to which those comparisons may lead them, and which may affect their understanding of the play.

Oliver Taplin writes that "a performed work should wear its meaning in view".[1] I am proposing that the dominant prop, the urn, is one way in which Sophokles' *Elektra* may make its meaning visible. As in the shield scene of the Aiskhylean play Sophokles reconstrues the image of a prop. His reconstrual, however, is more radical than the example from Aiskhylos who makes mental mappings between similar objects: eye and eye, fire and fire, hoplite and hoplite. Sophokles constructs spatial reconstruals not only verbally and through mental imagery, but visibly, and between objects that are dissimilar: the funerary urn, the beloved head of Orestes and the mask of Klytaimnestra. I shall also argue that the urn maps onto an image which overshadows the entire play and may be seen to unify it—that is, the tomb.

Before examining the image of the urn in the context of the spectators' prior experience and the play itself, I shall recall some aspects of visual perception and mental imagery which apply to the urn. This is necessary in order to avoid any misunderstanding relating to my use of theories which apply on the whole to mental imagery. The urn is introduced as a visible object late in the *Elektra*, so that in discussing it there is an overlap between its visually perceived and mental representations. The superimposing of one image upon another, of course,

[1] Taplin (1977) 18.

has to be imagined. On the appropriateness of applying theories on mental imagery to visually perceived images we find first of all that research into the relationship between the two suggests that there is a strong resemblance between them.[2] The object that we imagine can correspond closely to the object that we see,[3] the imagined object, the analog of the physical object which it represents.[4] Secondly, what is perceived and what is imagined can act as a retrieval cue to memory.[5] Thirdly, mental imagery and visual perception have a function in reasoning and problem solving.[6]

Another aspect in processing the image of the urn, whether it be perceived or imagined, is in the transformations which that image undergoes. The transformations that concern us, those of superimposition and reconstrual, involve at least two images which relate to one another in an image metaphor. Plates II.i, ii, iii at the end of the chapter are indicative of the reconstruals of the urn shape which I discuss below. The fact that these images are visible in the performance (as are Hitchcock's 'cages' in the film *The Birds*) reinforces their significance. In this case reconstrual occurs at three levels: the visible, the mental and the abstract. In addition to reconstrual, the transformation of the urn image invites a mental superimposing of images as we see at Plate II.v. In an analog system a variety of information can be processed simultaneously.[7] Such superimposition demonstrates something of this simultaneity.

Not only has Sophokles constructed for the spectators a series of superimposed images with abstract reference to death, deceit and revenge, but this matrix of information is itself superimposed on the image of a tomb (Plate II.iv). Just as the reconstrual of the urn shape facilitates the creating of "new interpretations of the original image",[8] the mapping of the matrix onto the tomb may also lead to new understandings, particularly as this 'tomb' finally represents the

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[2] Rubin (1995) 41–6. Cf. Paivio (1971) 87–9, Kaufmann (1985) 57, Finke (1986) 76–83.

[3] Finke (1985) 236–59.

[4] Rumelhart and Norman (1988) 511–587; see in particular the section on analogical representations (545–61) and conclusion at 554.

[5] Paivio (1983a) 6–8.

[6] Helstrup and Anderson (1996) 275–93. From four experiments Helstrup and Anderson conclude: "Objects with fixed or variable shapes, presented *verbally or visually* [my italics], can be used by subjects to make genuine discoveries in imagery" (289–90).

[7] Paivio (1983a) 8–9.

[8] Kaufmann and Helstrup (1993) 142–3.

skene into which Orestes and Elektra will return at the end of the play. Richardson argues for two aspects of mental images that may be useful to thinking. The first is their "spatial properties and relationships" and the second is the capacity of individual images to "manifest emergent properties" distinct from their "original description".[9] In situations where images are in a relationship with one another their capacity to produce new meanings may arise from conceptual blending. Turner describes blending as follows: "The mental operation of combining two mental packets of meaning…selectively and under constraints to create a third mental packet of meaning that has new, emergent meaning".[10] The meaning that emerges through the transformation of the urn image, I shall be arguing, may contribute to a clarification of revenge as tragedy.

The idea that revenge itself is tragic as opposed to something that is punishable as in Aiskhylos' *Oresteia*, or regrettable as in Euripides' *Elektra*, or is a 'problem' or even a 'solution' as proposed by modern commentators,[11] is a novel idea involving conflict and change. These are the factors, identified by Kaufmann, which make its treatment particularly suitable to imagistic presentation,[12] and to "reasoning through imagery".[13] Although my method is different, my conclusions about revenge tend toward interpretations that take a 'dark' view of the play.[14]

προεωρακώς

Public and private funerals

The development of the urn image has begun prior to the play in the associations which the spectators bring to the performance, in what

[9] Richardson (1983) 212.

[10] Turner (2002) 10. See also Turner's example of Bertran de Born above in the Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Blending. Also, Turner and Fauconnier (1999) 397–418, especially sections "Blending and Metaphor" (403–5) and "Visual Blends" (407–8).

[11] See Burnett (1998) xiii–xviii.

[12] Kaufmann (1985) 51–70, and Figure 1 and discussion above in Introduction, section III, *Image and word*.

[13] For this phrase see Rumelhart and Norman (1988) 555.

[14] See Segal (1981) 249–91; Gellie (1972) 106–30; Kells (1973) 1–12; and Ringer (1998) 127–212. For a useful bibliography and discussion of views of proponents of both the optimistic and the pessimistic interpretation of Sophokles' *Elektra* see MacLeod (2001) 4–20. MacLeod herself tries to steer a middle course by drawing out the "tension" (186) which the play explores between what is shameful and what is just in vengeance. Cf. March (2001) 15–20, who takes a positive view.

they have seen before (προεωρακώς, Poetics 1448b17). For the predominantly male spectatorship,[15] an occasion from civic life which may resonate with the image of the urn is the public funeral of the war dead which Thoukydides describes as a prologue to Perikles' funeral oration (2.34). The ceremony involved the burial of the incinerated remains of the war dead from the previous year,[16] one cinerary urn (λάρναξ) for each tribe (Th. 2.34.3). This type of burial was unique to Athens,[17] and its egalitarianism reflected democratic ideals.[18] Loraux writes: "In burying its [war] dead…the Athenian community appropriated them forever, and at the demosion sema all distinctions, individual or familial, economic or social, that might divide Athenians even in their graves were abolished".[19] Although the Athenian burial was public and communal there was opportunity for individuals to honour their own dead by bringing offerings prior to the burial ceremony (Th. 2.34.3) and by the female relatives of the dead conducting their laments at the tomb (Th. 2.34.4–5). But the essential character of the funeral was civic and male.[20]

The image of the urn also resonates with two famous funerals from epic. The remains of Patroklos (*Il.* 23.238–44) and Hektor (*Il.* 24.792–8) are gathered from their funeral pyres and buried in golden urns (φιάλῃ, *Il.* 23.243; λάρνακα, *Il.* 24.795). There is space for women's lament—Briseis leads the mourning for Patroklos (*Il.* 19.282–302), and Andromakhe, Hekabe and Helen that for Hektor (*Il.* 24.720–76)—but, above all, these public funerals serve to integrate their respective communities.[21]

The "collective identity" of the Athenian funeral for the war dead and even the funerals for the individual heroes Patroklos and Hektor

[15] On the composition of the audience, see Pickard-Cambridge (1968) 263–5, Goldhill (1997) 54–68, Foley (2001) 3 and n. 1, Rehm (2002) 50. Goldhill (1997) 58 writes: "It is certain that a very large majority of this huge audience was made up of Athenian citizens—adult enfranchised males". For an argument promoting the presence of women at dramatic performances see Henderson (1991) 133–47, and for a more guarded interpretation of some of Henderson's ancient textual evidence see Goldhill (1997) 63–6.

[16] On the return of these remains to Athens, see Jacoby (1944) nn. 1, 118.

[17] Jacoby (1944) 37–66 at 63. At n. 123 Jacoby cites Demosthenes 20.141 (*Against Leptines*).

[18] Loraux (1986) 22.

[19] Loraux (1986) 23.

[20] Loraux (1986) 24.

[21] Seaford (1994) 187.

"contrasts with the potentially divisive private funeral".[22] In his section, "The Aggressive Funeral", Seaford discusses the threat to its solidarity that the death of one of its members poses to a group.[23] Expressions of anger and self pollution are ways of regaining this solidarity. Where the deceased has been murdered, however, anger can find a ready outlet in revenge. The funeral may become a vehicle for a "display of its strength by a family... in a way that threatens the cohesion of the community".[24] At the same time, as Foley suggests, the separation of public and private concerns in fifth-century Athens was not so secure that funerals could not be used for political ends, and she cites Theramenes' use of mourners to prejudice the outcome for the generals at Arginousai.[25] A mixing of aspects of the public and the private funeral is found in the return of Orestes' ashes in an urn to Mykenai. An urn commemorating a hero killed in action, albeit at the Pythian games rather than in the Trojan or Peloponnesian wars, may evoke images for the spectators relating to public funerals in epic and recent history. The fact that these funerals serve to integrate a community (Akhaian, Trojan, or Athenian) and that the funeral of Hektor serves to dispel the elements of grief that lead to revenge,[26] throws the actions and intentions of Orestes into relief: his funeral, symbolised by the urn, commemorates the fictitious death of a fictitious hero; it is not designed to arouse public solidarity but to facilitate the private objective of revenge killing.

Vendetta, Foley argues, is part of the associations the spectators bring to the play, both as "cultural memory",[27] and from their own experience of the law courts where "plaintiffs frequently use words denoting revenge to describe the result that they wish to achieve against their opponents".[28] Acts of revenge during the Peloponnesian war will similarly shape that memory bank. If the play is dated at its earliest,

[22] Seaford (1994) 106.

[23] Seaford (1994) 86–92.

[24] Seaford (1994) 88.

[25] Foley (2001) 27 and n. 27 where she cites X. *Hell.* 1.7.8.

[26] In the *Iliad*, Akhilleus' vengeful desecration of Hektor's corpse is ended by his willingness to return it to Priam for burial (bk. 24), and Hekabe's desire for revenge against Akhilleus—τοῦ ἐγὼ μέσον ἧπαρ ἔχοιμι / ἐσθέμεναι προσφῦσα (24.212–3) "I wish I could set teeth in the middle of his liver and eat it" (translation by Lattimore [1961])—is not echoed in her funeral lament over Hektor (24.747–59).

[27] Foley (2001) 153.

[28] Foley (2001) 154. For opposing arguments on the expression of revenge in the language of the courts in the fourth century see Harris (1997) 363–6 and Herman (2000) 7–27.

near 425,[29] report of the bloody civil war and vengeful atrocities in 427 in Kerkyra (Th. 3.69–85) would be a fresh memory for the Athenian spectator. If, as seems more likely, the play was produced toward the end of the 410s,[30] then the intervening years had seen a series of vicious reprisals by both sides in the war.[31] A comparison of Athen's treatment of Mytilene and Melos is indicative of the hardening of Athenian sentiment over this period.[32] By the later 410s the courage and manliness of the Athenian warrior extolled in Perikles' funeral oration (Th. 2.35–46) could have been compromised by such events as Melos and the escalating brutality of the war.[33] Euripides *Troiades* may even have brought the plight of the Melians before the eyes of Athens in 415.[34] If Sophokles produced the *Elektra* at the very end of the 410s then the violence and intimidation perpetrated by the oligarchic council of the Four Hundred in 411 BC had brought vengeance to a new height of terror.[35] The image of the urn in Sophokles' *Elektra*, then, may evoke for the spectators a conflicting interplay of elements and issues from both the public and the private funeral.

Women and lament

In the context of the private funeral the image of the urn connects with a major function of women in Athenian society, their role in lament and care for the dead. Conflict over women's part in these rituals is reflected in tragedy.[36] Antigone resists the decree of the Kadmeian State (A. *Se.*),[37] and of Kreon (S. *Ant.*, E. *Ph.*) forbidding the burial of her brother Polyneikes; and the mothers of the Argive warriors killed in

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[29] For this date see March (2001) 21 quoting Kamerbeek.

[30] For arguments for this view see March (2001) 21–2.

[31] For a list from 427–416/15 BC see Kuch (1998) 149–50 with references to Thoukydides.

[32] In 427 Athens gave an eleventh-hour reprieve to Mytilene following its revolt (Th. 3.36–50 at 49), whereas in 416/5 the Spartan colony of Melos suffered the death of its military-aged men and the enslavement of its women and children at Athenian hands (Th. 5.84–116 at 116).

[33] On the "warrior ideology" see Roisman (2005) 106–9.

[34] See Kuch (1998) 147–53, Croally (1994) 232–4. Against a connection between Melos and *Troiades* see van Erp Taalman Kip (1987) 414–9.

[35] Th. 8.65–70.

[36] Fantham et al. (1994) 76–9.

[37] For differing views on whether Antigone's resistance in the *Seven* is authentically Aiskhylean see Thalmann (1978) "Appendix 1: The Ending of the *Seven*", 137–41.

the battle against Thebes claim the right to bury their sons (E. *Hik.*).[38] It is part of the Sophoklean Elektra's lament over the urn that she has been denied her traditional role in Orestes' burial (1136–42).

In the early sixth century BC Solon's reforms restricted excessive public lament by women at private funerals.[39] In his examination of funerary legislation by Greek city-states Garland identifies the potential of funerary ritual "to promote divisiveness and factionalism among the citizen body" as one of three main concerns behind such legislation.[40] Solon's reforms and similar restrictions on the attendance of women in the fifth-century funerary legislation of the town of Iulis underline the divisiveness of women's role in the ritual.[41]

Tragedy also suggests some of the dangers of women's lamentation. In the *Seven Against Thebes* Eteokles tries to silence the Khoros of Theban women whom he criticises for undermining the morale of the besieged city with their lamentation (182–6). The Khoros in Aiskhylos' *Khoephoroi* use the occasion of a visit to the grave of Agamemnon to excite a passion for revenge. The scene is reminiscent of the paintings of 'visits to the tomb' represented on white lekythoi of the fifth century BC commemorating the death of a young warrior.[42] In contrast with the vase paintings, the tomb in the *Khoephoroi* commemorates a hero not slain as a warrior-king on the battlefield by some equally distinguished enemy but slain naked (unarmed and disarmed) in his bath by his wife. Nor do the offerings come untainted: a terrifying dream has prompted Klytaimnestra to send them (*Kh.* 32–46; cf. S. *El.* 410).[43]

Aiskhylos' Elektra then asks the Khoros what form of words she should use as she pours out the libations: whether the old traditional phrases or, aware of their sham, she should pour in silence (84–105). The women instruct her to pray for vengeance:

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[38] Another problematic burial in tragedy is that of Sophokles' Aias.

[39] For reference to Solon's laws see Plou. *Sol.* 21. For dates, see A. W. Gomme, T. J. Cadoux and P. J. Rhodes OCD (1996) s.v. "Solon". For discussion of the legislation see Alexiou (1974) 14–23 and Seaford (1994) sections 3a, 3b, 4a.

[40] Garland (1989) 1–15 at 1.

[41] Garland (1989) 11–12.

[42] See white Attic lekythos, c. 440 BC, National Archaeological Museum, Athens, no. 1935, Beazley no. 216329.

[43] Burnett (1998) 106 calls the libation scene "a 'contaminated' ceremony, a topsy-turvy rite originally meant to paralyze the anger of the dead Agamemnon but reformulated by Electra and the chorus so as to become a call for help from underground powers".

Χο. τοῖς αἰτίοις νυν τοῦ φόνου μεμνημένη—
Kh. Now, when you get to Agamemnon's murderers…
Ἠλ. τί φῶ; δίδασκ' ἄπειρον ἐξηγουμένη.
El. What shall I say? Teach me, lead me—I must know.
Χο. ἐλθεῖν τιν' αὐτοῖς δαίμον' ἢ βροτῶν τινα—
Kh. …pray that some god or mortal may come…
Ἠλ. πότερα δικαστὴν ἢ δικηφόρον λέγεις;
El. To judge them, or to be the instrument of Justice?
Χο. ἁπλωστὶ φράζουσ', ὅστις ἀνταποκτενεῖ.
Kh. Simply say; to kill them in their turn.
Ἠλ. καὶ ταῦτά μοὔστιν εὐσεβῆ θεῶν πάρα;
El. Would the gods see this as a pious prayer?
Χο. πῶς δ' οὔ, τὸν ἐχθρὸν ἀνταμείβεσθαι κακοῖς;[44] (*Kh.* 117–23)
Kh. How could they not?
It's right to pay your enemies for what they've done to you.[45]

Sophokles' Elektra needs no such instruction but rather teaches her sister Khrysothemis the prayers of revenge (453–6). In the *Khoephoroi* the tomb of Agamemnon is the focal prop, whereas in Sophokles' *Elektra* the tomb is off-stage. The urn provides a cue for the tomb, the vengeance of the Khoephoroi being realised in the character of Elektra.[46]

Aiskhylos, Khoephoroi

Aiskhylos' play may also form part of the associations which the spectators bring to the performance of Sophokles' *Elektra*. Winnington-Ingram states a common observation: "*Electra* is full of reminiscences of the *Choephoroi*".[47] At a visual as opposed to a textual level a notable 'reminiscence' exists between the urn of the *Elektra* and the vessel for libations which Elektra uses at the grave of her father in the *Khoephoroi* (84–164). The scene repeatedly brings the attention of the spectators back to the pouring of the libation,[48] although the vessel itself is mentioned only once (τεῦχος, 99) and in reference to its being discarded in an act of "ritual dissociation".[49] The pouring of libations, prompted

[44] Seaford (1994) 91 draws further examples from the *Khoephoroi* "to illustrate how lamentation for the dead may create the solidarity and emotion necessary for revenge". Cf. Alexiou (1974) 22. The passions incited by the funerals of victims of the conflicts in Northern Ireland or Israel provide contemporary parallels. See Holst-Warhaft (2000) 2.

[45] Translation by Ewans (1995).

[46] On the reversal of characterisation between the Khoros and Elektra in the two plays see Goldhill (1986) 269.

[47] Winnington-Ingram (1980) 217. Cf. Goldhill (1986) 269.

[48] A. *Kh.* 87, 92, 97, 109, 129, 149, 156, 164.

[49] See Bowen (1986) at line 96. Cf. Garvie (1986) at lines 98–9.

by Klytaimnestra's dream and intended as a conciliatory action, is here subverted by the Khoros' advice to Elektra. The libations and their visible manifestation in the vessel which holds them are used to cheat Klytaimnestra, to curse her and Aigisthos (τήνδε τὴν κακὴν ἀράν, 146), rather than to bring her the blessings she seeks (τοιάνδε χάριν.../ μωμένα, 44–5). As a visual image which is a cue to a deception which will give rise to revenge, Elektra's libation vessel is a precursor of the funerary urn in the *Elektra*.

Not that there is no mention in the *Khoephoroi* of the bogus funerary urn. At 686 Orestes, playing the part of a Messenger before Klytaimnestra, introduces the mental image of the urn as a concrete substantiation of Orestes' death, an urn which can be brought from Phokis for burial if desired. Its description (χαλκέου πλευρώματα, *Kh*. 686, "with sides of bronze") may well have been borrowed by Sophokles for his urn in the *Elektra* (χαλκόπλευρον, *El*. 54, "bronze-sided").[50] But the urn in the *Khoephoroi* is not an image central to the deception story and the play as a whole, as is the funerary urn in Sophokles' *Elektra*.

Nevertheless, the *Khoephoroi* funerary urn does have imagistic and linguistic associations with the *Agamemnon* which further resonate with the urn of the *Elektra*. At Khoephoroi 686 Aiskhylos refers to the the urn as a λέβης echoing terms he has used in the *Agamemnon*. The Khoros of elders, singing of the work of Ares, evoke the very situation which culminated in Athens in state burial,[51] the bringing home of the ashes of the war dead:

φίλοισι πέμπει βαρὺ
ψῆγμα δυσδάκρυτον ἀν-
τήνορος σποδοῦ γεμί-
ζων λέβητας εὐθέτους. (*Ag*. 441–4)

He sends the relatives
the heavy dust for which they'll weep
cramming the urns with ashes
easy stowed
in place of men.[52]

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[50] Cf. March's commentary (2001) at line 54. See also Dunn (1998) 438–43.

[51] For discussion of the date of the institution of this custom in Athens see Loraux (1986) 28–30. The latest proposed date of 464 BC (by Jacoby [1944] *passim*) suggests that this was established practice in Athens before the production of the *Oresteia* in 458 BC.

[52] Translation by Ewans (1995).

Although sung in the production of the *Oresteia* in 458 BC these lines could equally describe the terrible fate of the Sicilian Expedition in 413. They capture the loss, pain, and cruel economy contained in the image of the funerary urn. If Sophokles' *Elektra* was produced in 413 as March argues,[53] then its central prop could have particularly powerful resonances for the spectators, many of whom would have known someone who had perished in the expedition.

Aiskhylos' only other use of λέβης in his surviving plays is in reference to the bath in which Agamemnon is murdered (δολοφόνου λέβητος, *Ag*. 1129). The bath in the *Agamemnon* and the urn in the *Khoephoroi* and in Sophokles' *Elektra* are vessels which occasion treacherous slaying, and both urn and bath function imagistically as tombs.

τεῦχος (*Kh*. 99), the word which Aiskhylos has used to describe the libation vessel, has similarly been anticipated in the same contexts as λέβης in the *Agamemnon*: τεῦχος also refers to the urns containing the ashes of the war dead (*Ag*. 435), and the bath (*Ag*. 1128). Aiskhylos' remaining use of τεῦχος in the trilogy is to refer to voting urns, the one used by the gods to sanction the attack on Troy (*Ag*. 815), and those used in the judgement of Orestes at the point where Athene adds her deciding vote for his acquittal (*Eu*. 742).

The progression of urn images through repeated vocabulary at significant moments in the *Oresteia* does not seem accidental. The urns of the war-dead root the play in Athenian practice and connect through urn-imagery with divine justification for the war in the lot-casting of the gods, the shameful death of Agamemnon, the revenge theme betokened by Elektra's libation vessel and Orestes' funerary urn, and the resolution of the cycle of revenge in the voting urns of the Athenians. Only the libation vessel and the juridical urns may be actual visual props but the image sequence nevertheless creates a pictorial summary of the plot and embeds it in actual Athenian practice. Sophokles, on the other hand, does not seek to create a paradigm by circumventing revenge through the imposition of law, but rather he takes up the urn as an image through which he can work in his spectators a change of understanding about revenge at a social/psychological level.

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[53] March (2001) 22.

Euripides, Elektra

Although we do not know which of the *Elektras* came first, Sophokles' or Euripides',[54] the use of the urn image by Euripides too warrants some mention. As Goldhill writes, "Electra's entrance with a water-pot parodies her entrance in Aeschylus with religious offerings for Agamemnon".[55] Both Sophokles and Euripides in their versions of the Elektra story seem to have relied more on Homer and Aiskhylos than on each other.[56] But the differences in their use of the urn image may nevertheless throw some light on their different intentions and directions for their respective plays, and, more specifically, on Sophokles' use of this image in such a dominant way. Further, if Euripides' *Elektra* did precede that of Sophokles, the water-pot may also be part of the spectators' associations.[57]

The water-pot in Euripides' *Elektra* announces the lowly status of Elektra to all the spectators in the *theatron* with an emphasis more dramatic and immediate than would be possible merely through the appearance of her mask and costume (184–5). Although simultaneously announced in language (55), the water-pot is an instant visual cue to the spectators of Elektra's menial role. Yet Euripides undercuts that evaluation in the words of Elektra herself which immediately follow: οὐ δή τι χρείας ἐς τοσόνδ' ἀφιγμένη/ἀλλ' ὡς ὕβριν δείξωμεν Αἰγίσθου θεοῖς (57–8) "Not at all from necessity have I gone to this length but to point out Aigisthos' insolence to the gods". Euripides establishes from the beginning that what this water-pot signifies is bogus. It does not appear as seriously fraudulent as Klytaimnestra's libation sent to the tomb of the husband she has murdered and the further subversion of that libation by Elektra and the Khoros; nor as treacherously deceptive as Orestes' ashes in the funerary urn. Rather, the water-pot contributes to the characterisation of Elektra. It does not signify her physical poverty but the distortions that have overtaken her mind. The repeated

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[54] For discussion of dates and chronology see March (2001) 20–22, Cropp (1988) xlvi–l, Winnington-Ingram (1980) Appendix G: 342, Kells (1973) 1 n. 2.

[55] Goldhill (1986) 250. Although it is not Elektra who enters with the urn in Sophokles' play, the introduction of the urn and the water-pot occur at the same point in their respective plays, at lines 54 and 55.

[56] See Goldhill (1986) 245–59 for his discussion of Euripides' *Elektra* and its Homeric and Aiskhylean allusions. On the Homeric in Sophokles' *Elektra* see Davidson (1988) 45–72. Cf. parallels between the three dramatists in their treatment of the myth in March (2001) 4–8.

[57] Winnington-Ingram (1980) 231 mentions but does not develop this possibility.

attention focused on the water pot (55, 65, 108, 140) stresses its dramatic significance,[58] and may reinforce the image as a cue to Elektra's pretentious poverty, her "self-martrydom and joy in weeping".[59] Those who care for her, her husband and the Khoros, recognise her self-pity and see it as futile but not harmful. Her husband humours her knowing that her physical exertions in fetching water are only token slavery, γὰρ οὐ πρόσω/πηγαὶ μελάθρων τῶνδ' (77–8) "for the springs are not far from the house". The Khoros invite her to a feast (167–74) and offer to lend her a festive dress (190–2). They do not suppose that her unsatiated lament "will prevail against her enemies" (κρατή-/σειν ἐχθρῶν, 194–5). Their tolerant accommodation of her contrasts with her own strident attachment to unnecessary hardship (304–10). With her final reference to her water-carrying (309), the water-pot has apparently fulfilled its dramatic objective.

Its place, however, among the grievances which constitute her message for Orestes (300–38) links it also to the revenge she seeks.[60] As Raeburn suggests, another of Elektra's grievances associated with the water-pot and her pained life which it represents is the fact that Orestes has not returned to alleviate her situation by exacting revenge for the murder of Agamemnon.[61] This connection between the water-pot and the death of her father has been prepared for imagistically in the second strophe and antistrophe of Elektra's monody (112–66). As Wiles explains, "The antistrophe effects a transformation of the strophe, so that the same visual image receives two meanings":[62] the metrical equivalence of lines 140–2 with 157–9 overlays the visible image of the water-pot (τεῦχος, 140) with the mental image of Agamemnon's bath (λουτρὰ, 157).[63] Elektra's unabated grief and the enactment of it in such actions

[58] See comments of Cropp (1988) at line 140.

[59] Raeburn (2000) 151–54 at 153.

[60] For the role of women in inciting revenge through lament in contemporary rural Greece, see Foley (2001) 155: "The lamenting women take the lead in creating shared memory and social and familial unity, in stirring or confirming the courage and desire to act, and in linking the worlds of the dead and the living through ritual; the men then use deception to perform the deed".

[61] Raeburn (2000) 154.

[62] Wiles (1997) 104.

[63] Further references to λουτρά in the play project the image of Agamemnon's death into the contexts of the revenge taken on Aigisthos (791, 794) and Klytaimnestra (1148). Segal (1981) 274 notes the use of the word λουτρά in Sophokles' *Elektra* to describe both the libations Orestes brings to his father's tomb (84) and the bloody "ablutions" (445) which Klytaimnestra administers to Agamemnon's head.

as bearing water has kept alive her desire for revenge, and will, against the predictions of the Khoros, "prevail against her enemies".

This desire for revenge and the wish to cultivate that same desire in Orestes are crowned by her "kakology" over the head of Aigisthos (907–56).[64] Cropp comments that this speech is "an inversion of the formal eulogy which might be delivered at graveside or funeral feast (the Athenian public *epitaphios logos* for fallen soldiers was a special form). Such speeches, as opposed to sung laments, were the province of men".[65] The speech is also an inversion of the lament of Sophokles' Elektra over the urn (1126–70). Both 'speeches', of comparable length, are of central importance in their respective plays. Sophokles' Elektra at her most pitiful achieves an heroic stature. Euripides' Elektra at her most triumphant reveals her corrupted heart.

Both objects of lament are presented by Orestes in language which echoes the other:

> αὐτὸν τὸν θανόντα σοι φέρω. (E. *El.* 895)
>
> I bring to you the man himself, dead.
>
> φέροντες αὐτοῦ σμικρὰ λείψαν' ἐν βραχεῖ
> τεύχει θανόντος, ὡς ὁρᾷς, κομίζομεν. (S. *El.*1113–4)
>
> Bringing his small remains in a little
> urn we carry him home, as you see, dead.

The one, the head of Aigisthos, invites hatred (855–7), the other, the urn containing the ashes of Orestes, an expression of deepest love (1126). The imagistic parallels of the two scenes may be even more apparent to the spectators. Toward the end of Elektra's lament for Orestes she addresses the urn as the head of her brother: ὦ κασίγνητον κάρα (1164). As Davidson points out, a visual association between urn and head would already have been established for the spectators through their familiarity with the pottery and painting of the fifth century.[66] In the case of Aigisthos, an even more familiar association in the context of drama is made between the head and its representative artifact, the mask,[67] an association which also resonates with Agave's discovery in

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[64] Cropp (1988) at lines 907–56.

[65] Cropp (1988) at lines 907–56.

[66] Davidson (1991) 95.

[67] See Davidson (1991) 92–3, and 93 n. 17 for discussion of whether Elektra addresses the head or the corpse of Aigisthos. See also Cropp (1988) at lines 855–7. Managing a body seems cumbersome when a head is what carries the identity of a

the *Bakkhai* that it is the head of her son Pentheus which she holds (E. *Ba*. 1284).[68] Further parallels between the mask/head of Aigisthos and the urn/head of Orestes arise in the removal of these objects from the acting-area into the *skene* (the Mykenaian palace [S. *El*. 1375] or the farmer's house [E. *El*. 959]), and the re-emergence of these objects of dramatic illusion as life-sized corpses at the end of the plays. The bodies of Klytaimnestra and Aigisthos are revealed on the *ekkyklema* at 1172–81 in Euripides' play, and, as discussed below, the urn/head of Orestes emerges from the *skene* in Sophokles' *Elektra* as the corpse of Klytaimnestra (1458–75).

The similarities in staging are a foil to the differences in effect. In Euripides' play the water-pot which acted as a visual cue to Elektra's relentless self-denigration in the service of her passion for revenge is replaced by an object which stands for the revenge itself, the mask/head of Aigisthos. Both objects are significant in enhancing meaning within the play, by projecting the self-interested aspects of revenge within the characterisation of Elektra. This vengeance aims at redressing wrongs done to her rather than at bringing honour to her dead father,[69] and may even be, as Burnett suggests, "unusually topical, for with its debased revenge it labels the factional street avengers of the close of the fifth century as womanish in their self-interest and their ignorance of honor".[70] The continuum of water-pot, mask/head and the fictive baby with which Elektra lures her mother to her death may further resonate with the lament by Sophokles' Elektra over an urn which she cradles as her baby brother. But neither the water-pot nor the mask/head, though the first is reminiscent of the libation vessel in the *Khoephoroi* and the second may have associations with the urn/head of Sophokles' *Elektra*, engage the spectators with an image that is socially or culturally charged for them. In contrast, the sustained and evolving image of the funerary urn in Sophokles' *Elektra*, playing off the spectators' actual experience with lament and burial, may have the power to transform the past for the spectators and suggest new possibilities for

person, even if it is only a skull as with Hamlet and Yorick. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) 37 make the point that if we ask for someone's photograph we would be disappointed if given just a photo of their body, whereas a photo of their head would fully meet our expectations. To present the corpse of Aigisthos at this stage also detracts from the climactic and graphic image of the corpses of Aigisthos and Klytaimnestra together at the end: cf. A. *Ag*. 1371; A. *Kh*. 973.

[68] Davidson (1991) 92 and Cropp (1988) at lines 855–7.

[69] Burnett (1998) 242.

[70] Burnett (1998) 245.

the future. Before discussing this evolving image and its capacity both to focus and to suggest meaning,[71] I consider a more general, unifying correspondence in the play between urn and tomb.

Prop and play

Within the larger framework of the play, the urn, as the receptacle of Orestes' ashes, provides a fictional representation of a dominant, if variously wrought, image of the play: that of a tomb. The tomb of Agamemnon, though not visible in the acting-area, provides the stimulus for revenge; the entombment planned for Elektra on Aigisthos' return, ἔνθα μή ποθ' ἡλίου/φέγγος προσόψῃ (380–1) "where you will never behold the light of the sun" is matched by the burial Elektra proposes for Aigisthos ἄποπτον ἡμῶν (1489) "far away from our sight" and highlights the ongoing nature of revenge. The overshadowing sceptre of Klytaimnestra's dream materialises in a *skene* representing Mykenai and its heir, Orestes, as her home becomes her tomb.[72]

Keeping this image before the mind are the funerary rites associated with urn and tomb which provide the motivation for much of the action in the play. Orestes and Pylades depart after the Prologue to take offerings to Agamemnon's tomb (51–3). Khrysothemis is on her way to her father's tomb with Klytaimnestra's offerings when she meets Elektra (326, 405–6) and is urged by her to replace the polluted gifts with locks of the girls' hair and with Elektra's belt (449–52). This meeting is dramatically fortuitous as it provides Khrysothemis with the perfect match to the lock of hair which Orestes has left at the tomb, and the sure sign of his return (900–4). It also provides the reason for her re-entry into the action (871–2). Finally, the urn itelf is the object of funerary rite. Elektra makes the lament for the dead over her brother's urn (1126–70) and Klytaimnestra is preparing it for burial (1400–1) when Orestes murders her.

There is a conceptual mapping between the urn and the tomb as places that house the dead. There is also an image mapping; this is a correspondence not between shapes with similar external delineation, as we met in the hourglass/waist and straw/tree trunk examples

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[71] Cf. Segal (1980–1) 125.

[72] At 1384–97 the Khoros draws these two images together as they sing of the fulfilment of their own dream in stealthy and bloody revenge within the house.

above,[73] but in the shared 'shape' of interior, dark, amorphous space. In its relationship with the tomb the urn calls attention to this space and a spatial dichotomy between inside and outside that is a cue to other dichtomies and inversions in the play: unseen and seen, hate and love, revenge and lament, male and female, death and life. Except for Elektra, Klytaimnestra and the Khoros, who imagine the urn literally as the tomb of Orestes, the urn is a strong metaphor for a tomb,[74] and achieves for the spectators optimal comprehension in the correspondence of a concrete, literal, visual urn with an abstract, non-literal, verbal tomb.[75] This means that the urn can be a cue for the spectators to the recurring theme of the tomb in the play, and may recall that theme in the context of revenge in the future, as a tomb which embraces the avenger and his/her victim.[76] Within the play the correspondence of urn and tomb is built for the spectators on deceit, a concept which is blended from a vehicle (the urn) which is bogus and a topic (the tomb) which allows neither the dead nor the living to rest.[77] With the death of Klytaimnestra there is a reversal of this metaphor as the *skene* becomes the concrete, literal, visual tomb of Klytaimnestra, which has a correspondence with the urn through the further conceptual blend of revenge. This correspondence between urn and tomb throughout the play helps both to create spatial unity and to underline the anomalies in the correspondence as it applies in the play compared with the conventional associations of funerary urn, tomb and death.

The urn is first mentioned at line 54, a mental image to be stored in the spectators' memory alongside more conventional funerary urns.[78]

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[73] See Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Image metaphor; and Lakoff (1993) 229 and Verbrugge and McCarrell (1977) 499.

[74] The vehicle and topic in strong metaphors have in common both abstract relations and structure. See Verbrugge and McCarrell (1977) 499 and discussion above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Comprehension of metaphor. Cf. Gibbs (1994) 245 on "double metaphors".

[75] See Figure 3 and discussion above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Comprehension of metaphor.

[76] Although he does not associate urn, tomb, and *skene* in an image relation, as I argue, Rehm's (1996) 55 view of the "door to the palace as a sinkhole that draws victim and killer ineluctably together, and down" is consistent with my view of the *skene* as an all embracing tomb.

[77] On conceptual blends see Turner (1996) 57–84 (2002) 9–20 and above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Blending.

[78] The urn is certainly 'coloured' at this time by the treachery to which it will be put, but this aspect of its function in the play is, I suggest, at this stage secondary to the spectators' conventional associations with such an object.

With its appearance, carried into the acting-area by Orestes and company at 1098, its transformation into a vehicle of deception becomes explicit. The image of the live Orestes alongside the symbol of his death is a visual refutation of the image of the urn so credibly woven by the Paidagogos into the mental imagery of the characters, and even more remarkably—given that they know the speaker's tale to be false—of the spectators themselves (757–60). The urn disappears from view into the *skene* at line 1375 and at 1401 Elektra reports that Klytaimnestra is preparing it for burial. When the urn makes a surprising reappearance, metamorphosed as it were into the corpse of Klytaimnestra, it makes its final transformation into a vehicle of revenge.

The line of thought which associates the urn with death, deceit, and revenge, however, is far from straightforward, as at each stage Sophokles seems to put forward an alternative thesis. For example, against its associations with tomb and death the urn also occasions two remarkable stories of the life-potential of the avengers, Orestes and Elektra. The Paidagogos touches Klytaimnestra's heart with his tale of Orestes' fictional exploits at the Pythian games and his untimely death (766 ff.); and Elektra awakens in Orestes a moment of deep compassion with her lament over the urn and her description of the care and courage with which she had nurtured him (1174–5). Both these reactions and the stories which occasion them are surprising against the dark world of the play and its tarnishing evil. They offer a respite from that contagious compulsion toward evil of which Elektra speaks (616–21) and which motivates and justifies revenge. The small urn, with its life-giving and death-giving associations, concentrates into one familiar image these conflicting themes which resonate throughout the play. In this way the urn symbolises the house of Atreus itself with its wealth and doom (9–10). In a drama which offers no specific criticism of revenge as Euripides provides in his *Elektra*, nor any legal solution as Aiskhylos invents in his *Eumenides*, the urn can function as a visual cue to meaning. To examine this function and its relation to the issue of revenge I shall trace the progression of urn images and the dichotomies which are associated with them.

Urn—death (*Plate II.i*)

Sophokles' *Elektra* opens with the Paidagogos displaying before his protégé Orestes his rightful inheritance as ʼΑγαμέμνονος παῖ (2) "son of Agamemnon". This is a panorama of geographic space infused with myth: ancient Argos and the wandering Io, the Lykian marketplace, the temple of Hera and finally, in the acting-area, Mykenai itself. For the actor playing the part of Orestes looking up into the *theatron* of the Theatre of Dionysos, the features of Argos take material form in the features of Athens. In the mind's eye of the spectators may be Athenian counterparts to the Argive sites: the Athenian agora with its altar to the twelve Olympians and associations with suppliancy and the court of law,[79] the Parthenon overshadowing the theatre, and the acting-area where they have witnessed the rituals of the City Dionysia. Such overlay of spatial features can invite, from the start, an overlay of issues of the play with contemporary concerns of the spectators.

At this initial point Sophokles allows the wonder of the returning exile to shine briefly over the play and presents an Orestes with a hint of choice: will he realise Μυκήνας τὰς πολυχρύσους (9) "a Mykenai rich in gold" or πολύφθορόν…δῶμα (10) "a house rife with death"? But mention of the bloody history of Mykenai closes the panoramic view and narrows the focus of the spectators and Orestes to the path of revenge. This, according to the Paidagogos, is the path in which he, as a surrogate mother, has nurtured his ward (13–14).[80] Sophokles omits any reference to Klytaimnestra in this scene and so distances revenge from matricide.[81] Orestes also avoids reference to matricide in his interrogation of the oracle as to 'how' he might take vengeance on the murderers of his father (33–4). The question he chooses to ask may be seen as a sliding away from the issue, and a distortion of Apollo's patronage.[82] The wolf-killing god for whom the Argive agora is named

[79] Wiles (1997) 196 n. 29. This altar was regarded as the "centre of Athens" (Camp [1986] 40–2 at 42).

[80] Elektra maintains that τρέφειν μιάστορα (603) "to bring up an avenger" would also have been her intention in the care of Orestes if it had been in her power to do so (603–5). Cf. Segal (1981) 252 on inversions of the "basic rhythms of life" in the play.

[81] See Vogt (1994) 100–1. It is left to Elektra to identify her mother as the murderer of her father and to emphasise the timelessness and irreversibility of that act through the simile of a woodcutter felling an oak (97–9). On this simile cf. Segal (1981) 257.

[82] Orestes does have a distinguished epic precedent in Odysseus and his questioning

is the patron god of initiates, of the citizen-right of the sons of warriors, and of a cult which emphasises military and athletic prowess,[83] a patron appropriate to Orestes' time of life (ἥβη). And yet Orestes is seeking the god's sanction not for the glories of competition or the battlefield, but for the dubious honour of matricide. His will be an *aristeia* achieved not with the heroic weapons of shield and spear and sword (cf. 36) but by means of a small urn.[84]

Anticipating Elektra's entrance into the action the scene ends with a cry from the *skene* (77), a space forward of the spectators and separate from them into which they cannot see.[85] The paidagogos exits under instruction to enter that same *skene*, representing the palace of Mykenai, to begin his work of deception (40), and Orestes and Pylades leave the acting-area to take offerings to Agamemnon's grave (51–3). The panorama of real places in Argos and their possible counterparts in Athens has shrunk to a stage illusion at its most minimal.

The object that may remain in the mind's eye of the spectators is the urn (τύπωμα, 54), announced as a stage prop to appear later in

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of the oracle at Dodone as to how (ὅπώς) he should return, openly or secretly (*Od.* 14.329–30, 19.298–9). See Davidson (1988) 57 on these connections. It may be that the *Odyssey* provided a model of justified and sanctioned revenge for fifth-century Athenians, but the *Odyssey* itself is ambiguous on this issue (see Katz [1991] 170–3, Nagler [1990] 335–56). Kells (1973) comments on lines 35ff: "The account of the oracle is so managed that we do not know exactly what it said (notice the vagueness of τοιαῦθ' (35) and τοιόνδε (38)). We do not know (from the structure of the sentence) whether it was the oracle which called the proposed killing ἔνδικοι, or whether χειρὸς ἐνδίκους σφαγάς represents Orestes' own words and Orestes' own estimation of the killing (which he assumed the oracle would agree with)". On the ambiguity of the role of Apollo in the play see Segal (1981) 280–3. For the view that Orestes' revenge is sanctioned by Apollo see March (2001) at lines 33–4. Cf. Horsley (1980) 18–29 who agrees that the revenge is sanctioned by Apollo, but suggests some criticism of Apollo on Sophokles' part, since the revenge is responsible for the "destruction of Elektra" (19). Vogt (1994) 97–104 argues that Orestes' question is a way around the dilemma of being duty-bound to avenge one's father's murder when such vengeance involves the outrage of matricide (100–1), and that Orestes has long decided on the deed ("Er ist schon lange entschlossen, seinen Vater zu rächen", 101). Vogt concludes that Apollo's word confirms the "moral correctness" of the deed—"Nachdem an so früher Stelle im Drama die Gerechtigkeit der Tat durch Apollons Wort bestätigt ist, können im folgenden keine Zweifel an ihrer moralischen Richtigkeit mehr aufkommen" (101)—"but [the oracle] does not represent the actual impetus to the action" ("nicht aber den eigentlichen Anlaß zum Handeln darstellt", 102).

[83] Graf *OCD* (1996) *s.v.* "Apollo".

[84] Dunn (1998) 441.

[85] On the contrast in tragedy between visible spaces and invisible spaces see Padel (1990) 336–65, and in particular 342–6 on the *skene* as space "within the spectators' field of vision, but into which they could not see" (345).

the play and to facilitate the plot. Linked to the public funeral for the war dead or echoing in its description as χαλκόπλευρον (54) "bronze-sided" the armament of the Homeric warrior as Dunn proposes,[86] the urn carries for the spectators connotations of the heroic. Equally, its allusion to the bogus funerary urn in Aiskhylos' *Khoephoroi* (686) and its use by Sophokles as the unheroic instrument of an unheroic act point to the contradictions to which the spectators can look forward when this prop starts to exert its influence in the play. Against Orestes' verbal hope that he will realise his hereditary wealth (72) in line with a Mykenai rich in gold, the strength of the contradictions in the image of the urn and the narrowing scope of the scene may invite an anticipation in the mind of the spectators more in line with a Mykenai rich in death. The scene's sense of diminution, of things unseen, of death and pseudo-death—economised through the hidden urn—may also suggest that the ostensibly pragmatic and god-sanctioned purpose of Orestes is to some extent problematical.

Not only is there a narrowing of focus from the panorama of Argos to the hidden urn but the urn image emphasises Orestes' connection in revenge to an interior space, that his body is ash within the urn (τοὐμὸν ὡς ἔρρει δέμας/φλογιστὸν ἤδη καὶ κατηνθρακωμένον, 57–8). This spatial distortion has a parallel in the desire for revenge which drives Elektra outside.[87] Indeed, Elektra is outside for all but "one hundred verses of the entire drama".[88] Orestes' furtive revenge is a deception which rouses his scruples (59–66),[89] whereas Elektra has no scruples about publicising the wrongs within the palace. She comes outside to tell everyone (πρὸ θυρῶν ἠχῶ πᾶσι προφωνεῖν, 109) what she has seen happening inside her house. She stresses the inside location (δώμασιν/ἐν τοῖς ἐμαυτῆς, 262–3; κατὰ στέγας, 282) from which her external position visually divorces her. Her repetition of the verb 'to see' emphasises the validity of her report (ὁρῶσα, 258; ὁρῶ, 260; ἴδω, 267; εἰσίδω, 268; ἴδω, 271; ἐγὼ δ ὁρῶσα, 282), and the concrete images with which she exposes the usurpation of her father's authority in the house instantiate the crime in a memorable way. Her reference

[86] Dunn (1998) 440–1. Cf. March (2001) at line 54.

[87] Cf. Segal (1981) 250–1, 254–60, 278 on 'inside'/'outside' as these spatial divisions apply to Elektra and Orestes.

[88] Horsley (1980) 19 n. 7. Horsley notes that Elektra's speaking part dominates the play: "Four times the size of the next largest role (Orestes)".

[89] Menelaos too balks at the ill-omen of playing one's own death in Euripides, *Helen* (1051).

to Agamemnon's throne (267), his clothes (268), his hearth (269), his bed (272), and even his memory through the religious abomination of Klytaimnestra's monthly celebration of his murder (284–5)—an event which reflects the sanctioned monthly festivals on the Akropolis in Athens—[90] insist on the presentness of this crime which happened so long ago. The immediacy which her emphasis on vision brings to the spectators also conveys to them the single-mindedness of her attachment to revenge. If Orestes' actions are shocking for their deceptiveness and hiddenness, Elektra's behaviour is shocking for its openness.[91]

In a further inversion of interior and exterior space Elektra's open lament for her father and detraction of the usurpers earn her a living death to be executed when Aigisthos returns. Khrysothemis describes her sister's fate: ζῶσα δ' ἐν κατηρεφεῖ/στέγῃ χθονὸς τῆσδ' ἐκτὸς ὑμνήσεις κακά (381–2) “Living in a vaulted chamber outside this land you will sing of your troubles”.[92] The metaphoric entombment that Orestes devises for himself in the urn and welcomes as a means of entering the house and achieving his revenge is paralleled by this plan for the actual entombment of Elektra—a plan which, although its victim, Elektra welcomes as a way to be permanently 'outside' (391) and to die avenging her father (399). The calculated trickery of Orestes' ploy heightens the bleak inevitability of Elektra's destiny. He acts in concert with his friends, she in isolation; he suffers only in appearance, she in fact. But for both revenge leads to an inversion of the spaces they would naturally occupy, he without, she within, and to a diminution of life's potential as it shrinks imagistically for both to the enclosed space of a tomb. Revenge turns Orestes' vision from the expanse of his inheritance to plots within closed doors; and Elektra's faded hope in the return of an avenging Orestes withers her life's expectations:

ἅτις ἄνευ τεκέων κατατάκομαι,
ἇς φίλος οὔτις ἀνὴρ ὑπερίσταται,
ἀλλ' ἁπερεί τις ἔποικος ἀναξία
οἰκονομῶ θαλάμους πατρός, ὧδε μὲν
ἀεικεῖ σὺν στολᾷ,
κεναῖς δ' ἀμφίσταμαι τραπέζαις. (187–92)

[90] Jebb (1894) at lines 280 f.

[91] Klytaimnestra is also 'shocked' by Elektra's 'openness' (516 ff.), although for different reasons.

[92] This would seem to be the fate of Elektra to which Klytaimnestra alludes at 517–8 and 626–7.

I waste away without children,
no loving husband protects me,
but as some worthless alien
I steward my father's rooms,
in unseemly clothes like these
I stand around empty tables.

The urn is a visual cue to such diminution and inversion, so that its primary purpose in the play as a trick (δόλος) appears, at this point, secondary to its generic associations with death. Its connotation of deceit is suspended by the dominance of Elektra and the power of her words in lament and argument.[93] Further, it is death in the lives of the avengers that the urn brings to mind, not the death of the usurpers.

Death begins to extend to the usurpers with the dream of Klytaimnestra. The image of a covered space fills her with fears of revenge for the revenge she has taken against Agamemnon for the sacrifice of Iphigeneia (530–3). In her dream Klytaimnestra sees Agamemnon reclaiming his bed and hearth and planting anew the sceptre usurped by Aigisthos (417–21). Her dream recalls the tokens (bed, hearth, and throne) that Elektra had earlier used in denouncing Aigisthos. But the throne as a token of kingship is replaced by its epic counterpart, the sceptre, with its origins in the earth itself.[94] A young shoot grows luxuriantly on this sceptre and overshadows "the whole land of Mykenai" (421–3), a metaphor that points to Orestes. What would have filled another mother with hopeful expectation, the probable return of a mature son to take up his inheritance, instead casts over her a canopy of fear and furtiveness.

In her prayers to Apollo Klytaimnestra keeps her message hidden (κεκρυμμένην, 638) as speech unsuited to the light (639–40), and from her own need for secrecy she imagines that others may act deceitfully against her (δόλοισι, 649). Ironically her language justifies her suspicions, echoing as it does the craft of Orestes (δόλοισι, 37) and the description of the urn as κεκρυμμένον (55) "hidden". Her language also recalls the craft she used to kill Agamemnon (124, 197, 279), and anticipates her own murder under the patronage of Hermes "who hid treachery in darkness" (δόλον σκότῳ/κρύψας, 1396–7). Again the urn

[93] On Elektra's verbal dominance of the action between the Prologue and the Paidagogos' story see Kitzinger (1991) 301–17.

[94] *Il.* 1.234–7. On the pedigree of Agamemnon's sceptre see *Il* 2.100–8. Cf. Goward (1999) 108 and her reference to echoes of Aiskhylos, *Agamemnon* 958–72.

economises these associations of hiddenness, darkness and deceit, but in an image that still speaks, as with Orestes and Elektra, primarily of death and entombment.

Klytaimnestra's prayer also recalls the advantages that vengeance has achieved for her in the form of present wealth (πλούτου τοῦ παρόντος, 648) and kingly power (σκῆπτρα, 651). March comments on parallels between Klytaimnestra's prayer for continuation of her own wealth and power with Orestes' aspirations to wealth and power at line 72. Orestes, March interprets, is justified, Klytaimnestra is not.[95] The parallels between Klytaimnestra and Orestes (particular in their partiality to deceit) and Klytaimnestra and Elektra (cf. 307–9, 605–9, 616–21) which Sophokles draws throughout the play can give the effect of justifying retribution. We can even see these parallels as the shared ground in a mapping between stories that results in the conceptual blend of retribution. Equally, these parallels can imply that Klytaimnestra and her children are three of a kind. For them all there is release (1490) and freedom (1509) to be achieved by revenge,[96] but behind revenge are deeds done in the dark (1493–6).

I have argued that throughout the first half of the play the urn remains predominantly a cue to death. At the same time the spectators' conventional associations between urn and death are overlaid by distortions. Orestes fabricates his death, Elektra provokes her death, Klytaimnestra dreams her death. The conventional and the universal is made idiosyncratic, abnormally desired and abnormally feared. The comparisons between these distortions and proper death ritual may redirect the spectators' anticipations of the outcome away from whether or not the revenge is successful. Rather, urn, cave, and overshadowing sceptre are images which are used in a situation of novelty and conflict, and may direct the spectators to the darkness at the heart of the play.

At this central point, there is a dramatic shift in perspectives as the Paidagogos' report of Orestes' death takes hold of Klytaimnestra, Elektra, the Khoros and the spectators themselves.[97] The Paidagogos' message is a taunt to those who trust in what they see as he plays

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[95] March (2001) at line 651.

[96] Elektra's final word in the play is λυτήριον, a "release" that the Khoros reformulate as "freedom" (see March [2001] note at lines 1508–10 for arguments which support the interpretation that the Khoros is addressing Elektra). Rather than "freedom", however, λυτήριον may resonate for the spectators with the dubious "release" Klytaimnestra sought (447, 635, 783).

[97] See Marshall (2006) 207–12 on the four audiences to the Messenger's report.

up the authenticity of his story by emphasising the credentials of an eye-witness account (762–3).[98] The false story with its plausible and memorable mental images is the precursor to the false urn which is soon to be presented visibly. Both overturn conventional expectations: the authority of the messenger speech and the reliability of what we see. Although the spectators are not deceived by the false story or the false urn the fictionality of these theatrical ploys deepens their involvement. The urn was early introduced as a trick but it is only at this point in the play that its associations with death begin to be overlayed by its associations with deceit. This deeper involvement with the urn as a visual metaphor for deceit coincides with its function within the plans of Orestes becoming subordinate to its effect in the life of Elektra and Klytaimnestra and the conflict that effect may bring to the spectators.

Urn—deceit *(Plate II.ii)*

Although the Paidagogos' story is intended for Klytaimnestra its effects are felt by its four audiences, the Khoros, the spectators, Elektra and Klytaimnestra. The Khoros listen to the story before making their lament: its point for them appears straightforward—the demise of the house in the end of its male line (764–5). For the Khoros the death of Orestes in a chariot race may bring the charioteer Myrtilos' curse of the house of Pelops to its fitting conclusion.[99] The Khoros respond to the Paidagogos' story as true, but their concession, ὡς ἔοικεν (765) "as it seems", hints at room for doubt, and at the fiction that the story is for the spectators.[100] And not only is it a fiction but a deceit, the Myrtilos myth anticipating the Paidagogos' story as an example of the way the house of Pelops achieves its ends.[101] Nevertheless, the bril-

[98] On the false messenger report see Seale (1982) 64–6, Goward (1999) 113–8, Barrett (2002) 157–67, Marshall (2006) 203–19.

[99] The Khoros sing of this myth as the source of the suffering (πολύπονος, 515) of the house in the epode (504–15) of the First Stasimon. For an outline of the myth and its three versions see Hansen (2000) 19–40, in particular, 19–26. March (2001) note at lines 504–15 draws the connection between the verbal echo of πρόρριζος (512) "root and branch" and πρόρριζον (765) in reference first to the death of Myrtilos and then to the death of Orestes, and notes that these are the "only occurrences [of the word] in the extant works of Sophocles".

[100] March (2001) ad loc.

[101] Goward (1999) 110–1 at 111.

liance of the story invites the spectators to be moved by its images, to envisage the success and tragedy of Orestes and to concur with the story even though they know it to be false. The story exploits the hopes and fears of the spectators in the real context of festival games and contests,[102] as well as their familiarity with and pleasure in epic description and artistic representation of such events.[103] Yet their evaluation of the story may be tempered by their superior knowledge of the plot which makes them complicit in its deception.[104] When this deception draws unpredictable responses from Klytaimnestra and Elektra its goal of revenge becomes more ambiguous.

For the third audience, Elektra, the story need scarcely have been told. It has one point for her: Orestes is dead (673, 677) and the possibility of revenge temporarily recedes (807–14). Kitzinger argues that the effect of the Paidagogos' lie on Elektra also has implications for the spectators because they are "deprived of the voice that has until now defined the terms of the action. In place of Elektra comes Orestes, whose actions and words not only absorb and silence the Elektra of the first half of the play but also depend upon deceit, a mode of action that is in direct opposition to Elektra's".[105] If Sophokles is to work a changed perspective in his spectators, a reconceptualisation of an issue, then an Elektra whose dominance arises from her verbal victories—as Kitzinger argues Elektra achieves against the Khoros, Khrysothemis and Klytaimnestra in the first half of the play—[106] may not be the best strategy. Orestes' novel approach to matricide was introduced through imagery, and his problem will be solved through word and action.[107] The urn and deceit story, however, is about to take a different turn, to be seen through the eyes and heart of Elektra. This may not be the place for verbal strategies but for the use of imagery in a situation of novelty and cognitive conflict. I shall return to this point below in my discussion of Elektra's lament over the urn. But preparatory to this unexpected

[102] N. Crowther (1994) 121–33, Goward (1999) 115. Cf. Marshall (2006) 203 n. 4.

[103] See above in Introduction, section II, *Mental images*, Descriptive passages.

[104] Goward (1999) 113 writes: "Watching fictional characters watch another fiction— . . . —in particular reminds the audience of its own naive collusion; a problematic effect". Cf. Seale (1982) 66.

[105] Kitzinger (1991) 318.

[106] Kitzinger (1991) 306–17.

[107] See the use of imagery in the initial phases of problem solving, and discussion of the Orestes example above in Introduction, section III, *Image, word and thinking*, Novelty and conflict.

change is another. For Klytaimnestra, the fourth audience, responds to the deception story and its images of her son with insights that lead her, if only briefly, to a reconceptualisation of the avenger she dreads.

The Paidogogos projects what Klytaimnestra's response to his story will be by announcing that his news is welcome (666–7). If Klytaimnestra regards this news as Apollo's prompt answer to her prayer, she outwardly controls her relief; she asks the Paidagogos to repeat himself, she tries to silence the distracted Elektra and, finally, she asks for a true description of Orestes' death. Such caution by Klytaimnestra would be consistent with the "hidden speech" (638) behind her prayer to Apollo. At that time she spoke openly of averting any hostility her dream may forbode and turning it back upon her enemies (647). The Paidagogos' story of Orestes' death would seem to have achieved this for her, and yet the expression of her relief is drawn from her as a reassurance to the Paidagogos that his journey has not been in vain (μάτην, 772). In both her prayer to Apollo and her response to the Paidagogos Klytaimnestra is concerned with one thing, release from her fears (635–6, 783, cf. 447). Her own part in creating these fears taints her desire for release from them. But wanting to be free of fear of the revenge of Elektra and Orestes is not necessarily the same as actively desiring their deaths nor of actively pursuing their deaths as they do hers. Ironically, out of this false account Klytaimnestra discovers feelings for Orestes not based on fear of his vengeance or relief at his death, but on the pain of losing a child and the dreadful paradox that from his death comes her life (766–8). The fact that the story is a fiction ceases to matter at this point for there is a genuineness to Klytaimnestra's response that can strike a chord with the spectators and is quite beyond the thinking and predictions of the Paidagogos. Her response is even potentially undermining to the Paidagogos' aims, for Klytaimnestra's sentiments are incompatible with a mind-set to justify revenge.[108]

Indeed, as if to bolster the justification for revenge that may have been weakened by this scene Elektra interpets Klytaimnestra's feelings and reactions to the spectators. Macleod accepts Elektra's interpretation as the confirmation of "Klytaimnestra's rejection of her maternal role and her utter lack of pity" and finds in this scene the grounds

[108] Those who accept that Klytaimnestra's grief is genuine include: Jebb (1894) ad loc.; Kamerbeek (1974) ad loc.; Kells (1973) ad loc.; Winnington-Ingram (1980) 232; Segal (1981) 260; Ringer (1998) 172–4. Cf. Marshall (2006) 219.

for justifying the revenge: “Klytaimnestra…has condemned herself by her own words”.[109] But whether Klytaimnestra wept with hypocritical excess (δεινῶς, 805) or didn’t weep (as the answer Elektra’s question implies [804–806]) or laughed (807), she is damned by Elektra. The spectators, too, have just watched this scene and heard the reaction of an unsympathetic witness in the Paidagogos. As Ringer notes, “The audience at last has the opportunity to check one of Electra’s ‘enactments’ or ‘directoral interpretations’ against its own sensibilities”.[110] If the sincerity of Klytaimnestra’s grief is in question because it is mixed with the relief of avoiding the vengeance of Orestes, so is Elektra’s grief insincere, mixed as it is with the loss of an opportunity for vengeance (808–12). Only at the end of her lengthy self-lament does Elektra express any pity for Orestes, the brutal manner of his death and his burial by strangers (861–70). The dominant place of vengeance in both these women’s lives has itself reduced the sort of Orestes portrayed by the Paidagogos to a fiction. In their minds he has not been a vibrant, talented, competitive youth. He has been simply an avenger, the reification of the fear of the one and the obsessive desire of the other. For the spectators, the Paidagogos’ story, with its stunning evocation of life being lived to the full until its tragic end, is placed against the reactions of Klytaimnestra and Elektra and the diminished lives their reactions reflect.

Images of the chariot race may also reawaken those images of the opening lines of the play, linked as they are to Orestes’ potential through his inheritance and through his own achievements. He is a young man in every way ripe for initiation under the patronage of Apollo. Instead, his μέγιστον σῶμα (758) “mighty body” is represented as contained ἐν βραχεῖ/χαλκῷ (757–8) “in a little bronze urn”. The contrast may maximise pathos or arouse disquiet. For Orestes has not proved himself a great man either at home or abroad; rather, the urn highlights that his is to be an initiation through an unequal contest, revenge through trickery.[111] The small urn is a fitting visual symbol of the Paidagogos’ narrative which “telescopes” Orestes’ fictional success

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[109] MacLeod (2001) 125–26. See also this theme at 102, 122, 167–8, 170–1.

[110] Ringer (1998) 177.

[111] Cf. Seale (1982) 66. For a more favourable slant on the function of deception in the play see MacLeod (2001) who argues that “*dolos* has not simply served vengeance but rather is what will bring about the ‘just slaughters’, as Apollo’s oracle decreed” (161). For reservations about Macleod’s position see Marshall (2006) 206 n. 17.

at the Pythian games by giving only a brief account of his supposedly many exploits (χὤπως μὲν ἐν παύροισι πολλά σοι λέγω, 688),[112] and of Orestes himself. The transition which the Paidagogos' story brings about from a concentration on death in the first half of the play to deceit, and the parallel transition in these associations with the urn is also reflected in Elektra's changed circumstances. The deceit of Orestes' death removes from Elektra the threat of her own death. Her public profile is no longer of concern to Klytaimnestra who instructs the Paidagogos, "Leave her to shout from outside her troubles and those of her family" (τήνδε δ' ἔκτοθεν βοᾶν/ἔα τά θ' αὑτῆς καὶ τὰ τῶν φίλων κακά, 802–3).[113] In palace politics Elektra has become irrelevant; the bogus ashes in the urn signify the drying up of her own life (ἀλλὰ τῇδε πρὸς πύλῃ/παρεῖσ' ἐμαυτὴν ἄφιλος αὐανῶ βίον, 818–9, "But by this gate I shall let myself fall and friendless waste away my life").

In the transition from urn—death to urn—deceit, the physical diminution of Orestes by death is mapped onto the psychological diminution of Elektra by the deceit. There is a fully resolved metaphor between the literal, visual, concrete ash of Orestes in the Paidagogos' story and the non-literal, verbal, abstract ash of Elektra's life.[114] Using the cognitive processes of comparison and anticipation which Kaufmann proposes,[115] the spectators may be drawn from the conventional correspondence between urn and death which is laid on the foundation of their own experience, beyond Orestes' trick which provides the urn with the connotation of deceit, to an awareness of the potential for such deceit to destroy those it seeks to help. This is a novel anticipation which is facilitated and economised by the urn image and the dynamic transformations which it symbolises.[116]

If Elektra has become irrelevant to the usurpers she also becomes irrelevant to those with whom she is allied. So unshakeable is her belief

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[112] Ringer (1998) 166.

[113] This, in contrast to Klytaimnestra's earlier concerns that Elektra's 'outside' existence was disgracing the family (518) with the implication that Elektra was voicing a dissent which with the right leader (Orestes) could rouse public opinion against the usurpers.

[114] See Figure 3 and discussion above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Comprehension of metaphor.

[115] See Figure 2 and discussion above in Introduction, section III, *Image, word and thinking*, Comparison and anticipation.

[116] On the dynamic functions of imagery see Paivio and Clark (1991) 224, Antonietti (1991) 211–27, and above in Introduction, section III, *Image, word and thinking*, Static and dynamic images.

in Orestes' death that it overrides the sure signs (σαφῆ/σημεῖ', 885–6) that Khrysothemis has seen at Agamemnon's tomb. Elektra trusts the words of her mother's friend over what her sister has seen.[117] Her despair deludes her into seeing what is not there and into not seeing what is there. And her delusions manifest themselves in her fantasies about her own strength to take vengeance, at first with her sister (954–7) and then alone (1019–20), and her inability to brook any opposition or dissent (1017–8, 1031, 1052).

The Khoros sing in praise of the spirit of her opposition to Klytaimnestra and Aigisthos and of her filial loyalty that finds its precedence in the natural world (1058–97). Their song intensifies the pathos which is mounting around Elektra's situation. They do not, however, concur with Elektra's impractical plan for revenge, a position which would reverse their earlier plea to her to listen (πείθου, 1015) to her sister Khrysothemis. Their sense of Elektra's excellence and wisdom seems to stem from her persistence in the disturbing and time-honoured role of women in performing lament (1085–6), and from the fact that through that mourning she has "equipped a noble remedy" (1087).[118] They redirect the manly role of vengeance which she plans to adopt into its acceptable female counterpart.[119] I cannot agree with March that in the Second Stasimon the Khoros "are completely won

[117] In the first fifteen lines of Khrysothemis' account of what she saw at her father's tomb there are ten words associated with vision (892–906); this concentration of visible evidence provides the proof for what then becomes knowledge (907, 910). The weight of Khrysothemis' conclusions over what Elektra has learnt by hearsay (926) adds to the poignancy of Khrysothemis' puzzlement: πῶς δ' οὐκ ἐγὼ κάτοιδ' ἅ γ' εἶδον ἐμφανῶς; (923) "How can I not know what I clearly saw?" and points up a lack of judgement on Elektra's part.

[118] In this the Khoros' position has changed from the Parodos (121–250) when they sang a *kommos* with Elektra and tried to persuade her from her excessive lament.

[119] In planning to take vengeance Elektra sees herself as assuming the role properly filled by Orestes (951–3) and she refers to the "manly spirit" (ἀνδρεία, 983) which will win public honours for the sisters if their vengeance is successful. Khrysothemis too identifies vengeance as outside the role of women (997). That vengeance was seen as men's work is also suggested by the characterisations of two successful female avengers: Klytaimnestra (A. *Ag.*) and Medea (E. *Med.*). Ironically, Elektra would be modelling herself on her hated mother. In *Agamemnon* Klytaimnestra plans like a man (11), speaks like a man (351) and has the competitiveness of a man (940). Medea desires to act like a man: she would prefer battle to childbirth (250–1), a role outside the house that gives scope to the male ethos of harming enemies and helping friends (807–10), and in her vengeance on Jason she does what no Greek woman would dare (1339–40). The Bakkhai are assuming the masculine role of hunters when they exact their revenge on the prying Pentheus (E. *Ba.* 1202–15). None of these women win public honours for their successful vengeance.

over to Elektra's viewpoint",[120] but rather that they speak as they have before, "in good will" (εὐνοίᾳ, 233). They support vengeance (126–7, 472–501, 1384–97) but by applauding her lament they underline the fact that her plans lack judgement. The deceit of the Paidagogos' story instantiated in the urn involves an otherwise wise and good woman in self-delusions, in strife with her sister, and in a failure to recognise what is obvious and most sought after: evidence of her brother's living presence in a lock of his hair.

The unwitting deceit perpetrated upon her by the Paidagogos' story also undermines her judgement and verbal credibility in the eyes of the spectators. Kitzinger writes, "The distance thus created between the audience's knowledge and Elektra's deprives her speech of its power to reflect reality and makes her an object of pity rather than the persuasive interpreter she has been".[121] Kitzinger's view is consistent with the way Sophokles mutes his protagonist in the second half of the play and repeatedly signals this fact to the spectators; the first of these signals comes at the high point of Elektra's recognition of Orestes when he urges silence on her importunate joy (ἀλλὰ σῖγ' ἔχουσα πρόσμενε, 1236; σιγᾶν ἄμεινον, 1238).[122] By seeing Elektra's power in her verbal dominance, however, Kitzinger underestimates the power of the image of Elektra, particularly in her lament over the urn. This image may not invest Elektra with "control over the action",[123] but it may invest her with power over visual meaning in the play.

Elektra's lament (1126–70), delivered in iambic trimeters rather than the more lyric anapaests in which she had earlier lamented Agamemnon (86–120) is a development of the urn-deceit theme as it applies to her and was introduced with the false news of Orestes' death. Similarly, the Paidagogos' report is the development of the urn-deceit theme as it applies to Orestes and was introduced through the trick of the urn at line 54. Elektra's lament for Agamemnon is made with the 'hidden' urn already in the mind's eye of the spectators and with it the knowledge that Elektra's lament is not fruitless either in its call for vengeance or for the return of Orestes. In her lament for

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[120] March (2001) at lines 1058–97. Cf. March (1996) 73–4.

[121] Kitzinger (1991) 319.

[122] For further attempts to silence Elektra see 1251–2, 1259, 1288, 1292, 1322, 1335, 1353, 1364–6, 1372. On this motif in general see Davidson (2000) 17–28 and particularly 21–3 on Sophokles' *Elektra*. At 1483 Elektra herself denies speech to Aigisthos as does Orestes 1491–2, 1495, 1501.

[123] Kitzinger (1991) 323.

Orestes the urn is no longer hidden but visibly present as an instrument of vengeance, as is the avenger Orestes himself. The spectators can even look forward to an imminent recognition scene. Yet this lament, delivered in the metre of speech rather than emotive lyric, does not invite the spectators to see the return of Orestes and the expectations of the achievement of revenge made tangible by the visible urn as alleviating Elektra's distress. Nor is the lament a call to vengeance in the tradition of Aiskhylos' Khoephoroi and their prayers at the tomb of Agamemnon (*Kh.* 117–23).[124] Rather the lament turns the direction of the play towards a contemplation of Elektra as the most innocent of the victims of Klytaimnestra's revenge on Agamemnon and of Orestes' revenge-oriented deceit. Some of the verbal techniques used by Sophokles to give this speech its power are outlined by Kitzinger.[125] The visually perceived urn, on the other hand, is the image at the centre of the power of the lament and remains a visual cue to the spectators of a moment of transition in the play.

There is something surprising in the importance which accrues to the urn at this point. When, over 1000 lines after it was first introduced, the urn is brought physically into the acting-area and Orestes echoes earlier descriptions of it and its contents (cf. 53–8, 757–9)—αὐτοῦ σμικρὰ λείψαν' ἐν βραχεῖ τεύχει (1113–4) "his small remains in a little urn"—the spectators' interest may be captured merely by the visual irony of the living man supposedly carrying his own ashes. We might also expect Elektra's firm attachment to the false symbolism of the urn, matching her adamant rejection of the clear signs of Orestes' return (885–6), to undermine the integrity of the lament and the seriousness with which the spectators receive it. It could be seen as another example of her lack of judgement. This does not happen. As Elektra foregrounds the urn and attaches to it the same significance that Khrysothemis attached to the lock of hair,[126] the urn takes on a strange reality of its own; it becomes the baby Orestes and the object of Elektra's care. This scene may resonate for Athenian spectators with memories of the return of the small remains of their own

[124] For the place of women's lament in inciting revenge see above in this chapter, προεωρακώς, *Women and lament*; and Seaford (1994) 91, Alexiou (1974) 22, Foley (2001) 155.

[125] Kitzinger (1991) 322 n. 59.

[126] Both Khrysothemis and Elektra speak of visible proof (ὁρᾶν τεκμήριον, 904; ἐμφανῆ τεκμήρια, 1109) though Elektra interprets what she sees by what she has heard (ἧς ἠκούσαμεν φήμης, 1108–9).

war dead which they witnessed at the public funeral conducted annually throughout the war (Th. 2.34). These were the children whom Athenian parents had nurtured to adulthood with hopes for a prosperous life. The actor Polus in the fourth century BC, according to the story, gave material form to such memories when, playing the part of Elektra in this scene, he cradled the funerary urn containing his own son's ashes.[127] In the opening lines of the lament he could be speaking for himself and for many of the spectators:[128]

> ὦ φιλτάτου μνημεῖον ἀνθρώπων ἐμοὶ
> ψυχῆς Ὀρέστου λοιπόν, ὥς σ' ἀπ' ἐλπίδων
> οὐχ ὧνπερ ἐξέπεμπον εἰσεδεξάμην . (1126–8)

> O memorial of the dearest of men to me
> what remains of the life of Orestes, how far from the hopes
> with which I sent you forth do I receive you back.

In 424 Athens suffered heavy losses at Delion (Th. 4.89–101) and in 418 a serious defeat at Mantineia (Th. 5.69–74). If, as mentioned above, the play was produced near 413, then the Theatre of Dionysos may have filled with weeping over Athens' lost sons in Sicily.

Within the action of the play the urn has signified a double fiction about Orestes, his glorious life and his untimely end. Elektra's lament, on the other hand, builds on her real life's disappointments and the real death that she wishes for herself. In her act of taking hold of the urn she begins its transformation from a stage prop into a universal symbol of mourning. She holds the urn in her arms and weeps over it as a mother might over a dead child. The urn itself has the shape of both womb and tomb. She repeats the hope-filled verb of sending Orestes away (1128, 1130, 1132) and in describing him as λαμπρὸν (1130) "brillliant", she unknowingly echoes his own claim for his return, ἄστρον ὣς λάμψειν (66) "to shine forth like a star". She grieves for the disruption of the natural order when a child dies before its parent, and she is aware of the irony that she has won this particular sorrow by her previous saving act toward him (1131–5). Then, although he would have died as a babe, he would have been properly buried with his father, not as now, "tended by foreign hands" (1141, cf. 865–70). She grieves for the "sweet

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[127] Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights* 6.5.

[128] Cf. A. Gellius' comment on the story: "Itaque cum agi fabula uideretur, dolor actus est" (*NA* 6.5.8) "Therefore, while it seemed that a play was being acted, it was in fact real grief that was enacted" (translation by Rolfe [1948]). Cf. Dingel (1971) 355.

labour" (1145) she lavished upon him as his nurse and mother figure. Where the fictional Orestes is a much larger character than the actual, the real Elektra of the lament grows in stature. The mental imagery of this passage with its feminine perspective is as rich and emotive as the mental imagery of the chariot race with its masculine perspective. Both passages describe an *aristeia*. But Elektra's moment of pre-eminence also touches on reality through the perceived image of the urn, an image delayed by Sophokles until this scene.

Not only do the spectators see an object that represents on overlay of their past memory experience of death and their present theatrical experience of the urn as a deceit but in Elektra's lament Sophokles reconstrues the image of the urn into the head of Orestes (1164; Plate II.ii). As mentioned above this image does not imply the type of creative mental reconstrual that it might for a modern spectator but rather a concreteness born from the fifth-century spectator's familiarity with urn-head pottery.[129] Sophokles introduces this transformation of the urn image toward the end of Elektra's lament. The urn has changed in the course of the lament from a memorial of her beloved brother (φιλτάτου μνημεῖον, 1126) to the ash and shade of the beloved form (φιλτάτης/μορφῆς σποδόν τε καὶ σκιὰν, 1158–9) to Orestes himself (φίλταθ', 1163) personified and addressed as "O brotherly head" (ὦ κασίγνητον κάρα, 1164). Between these final two vocatives is the repeated assertion that Orestes has killed Elektra by his death: ὥς μ' ἀπώλεσας·/ἀπώλεσας δῆτ' (1163–4). This is not a new idea to the spectators. Elektra's first response to the false news of Orestes' death was to conflate her death with his (674, 677), and her language at 1163–4 echoes that at line 808 ('Ορέστα φίλταθ', ὥς μ' ἀπώλεσας θανών, "Dearest Orestes, how you kill me by your death"). Without the vengeance promised by Orestes she has nothing to live for (809–12).

In the lament, on the other hand, allusion to revenge occupies only four (1153–6) of the forty-four lines of the speech. When she addresses the urn as Orestes and says that he has destroyed her it is a grief built on her love of him. The spectators are challenged to integrate the urn into a new framework. The literal, visual, concrete urn which represents Orestes' deceit is mapped onto the literal, visual, concrete urn that represents Elektra's love for her brother. At one level the deceit has killed her; at another her love has killed her. The reconstrual of

[129] See Davidson (1991) 95.

the urn into the beloved head overlays the corresponding abstractions of deceit and love in an incongruous relationship. These ideas, superimposed and made concrete through the transformations of the urn images are disturbing, memorable, and point the spectators to corruption in this revenge plot, when treachery can destroy the one it is supposed to protect. Such an hypothesis may be seen as a blending between "two…packets of meaning";[130] the spatial relationship between urn and head insists on the abstract relationship between deceit and love. In the reconceptualisation of the deceitful urn into the beloved head the spectators are invited to resolve these "two packets" in new meaning.

The incongruity in the urn imagery in Elektra's lament is reinforced at an emotional level. The spectators may be drawn with Elektra into the experience of the death of a loved one, only to have those emotions betrayed by the reminder of the deceptive purposes of the urn. Gellie describes Elektra's tragedy as "the warping of a wonderful capacity to feel".[131] When the Paidagogos deceived the internal audience of the play with his report of Orestes' death, the spectators were to some extent co-conspirators with him, but in Elektra's *aristeia* the urn facilitates the spectators' identification with her. The subsequent "warping" of their own "capacity to feel" may heighten their disaffection for the revenge which this bogus tomb represents.

The lament ends with a return to repeated themes of Elektra's wasting away,[132] and her desire for death and entombment, but here these themes are given a particularly vivid cue through the visible urn. The care and courage Elektra has shown toward Orestes, her own remarkable achievements, as well as his fictional (but to her factual) successes at the Pythian games, are as nothing (1129), a small mass (1142), dust and shade (1159). Her wasting away unites her to him as nothing to nothing (1166). If before Elektra looked upon her forced entombment as a way in which she could forever "live out" her loyalty to her father, her vision of entombment now is of a future in Hades:

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130 Turner (2002) 10, and see discussion above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Blending.

131 Gellie (1972) 122.

132 See the forms of τήκω ("I waste away") at 123 (apparatus criticus), 187, 283, 835, (contrast ἐντέτηκε,"it has sunk deep within", at 1311). τήκω and its compounds is used in Homer to describe the effects on Penelope of her longing for Odysseus (*Od.* 19.136, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 264). As mentioned above, at 819 Elektra's wasting starts to converge imagistically with the ash of Orestes through the use of the verb αὐαίνω, "dry up".

τοιγὰρ σὺ δέξαι μ' ἐς τὸ σὸν τόδε στέγος,
τὴν μηδὲν ἐς τὸ μηδέν, ὡς σὺν σοὶ κάτω
ναίω τὸ λοιπόν. (1165–7)

Therefore welcome me into this your house,
nothing to nothing, that with you below
I may live the future.

Her use of δέξαι…ἐς with στέγος suggest that what Elektra has in mind when she calls upon Orestes to "welcome" her into the urn is indeed a house. I shall return to some implications of this image below.

Urn—revenge (*Plate II.iii*)

Elektra's lament prefigures in some ways Klytaimnestra's preparation of the urn for burial (1400–1). That scene is not visible to the spectators and is reported to them by Elektra. Both occasions reveal women fulfilling their roles as chief mourners of their child while that child stands unrecognised before them.[133] The moment of recognition brings for the one the hope of which she had despaired and for the other the dread from which she imagined she had been delivered. There is a sense of poetic justice as Klytaimnestra's death cry (1404–8) from within the *skene* echoes that first cry of Elektra from within the house (77–81);[134] as Klytaimnestra meets her death inside her home rather than Elektra meeting her living death 'outside'. But there is also a sense of continuity between mother and daughter. The urn has passed from one to the other, Klytaimnestra continuing the rites of burial begun by Elektra's lamentation and Elektra taking up the art of dissembling of which she had previously accused her mother (804–7) and hiding real joy behind sham tears (1309–13).

As earlier in the play Elektra had come outside to declaim publicly the wrongdoing of her mother and Aigisthos, at its end she comes outside to relay the progress of her mother's murder to the Khoros and the

[133] Elektra underlines the visual irony of this situation in her recognition of the Paidagogos: πῶς οὕτω πάλαι/ξυνών μ' ἔληθες οὐδ' ἔσαινες; (1358–9) "How, though you were with me for so long did you go unnoticed nor did you make yourself known?".

[134] As March (2001) at 1415–6 notes, the element of fitting retribution is also suggested by the verbal repetition in the death cries of Klytaimnesta and Agamemnon, both struck twice: ὤμοι πέπληγμαι (S. *El.* 1415 = A. *Ag.* 1343), ὤμοι μάλ' αὖθις (S. *El.* 1416 = A. *Ag.* 1345).

spectators. Not a third person account, it is delivered as by one present at the scene and actively involved. Elektra speaks in the first person to both Klytaimnestra and Orestes. It is Elektra not Orestes who answers Klytaimnestra's plea for pity (1410–2) and it is Elektra who urges Orestes to strike their mother a second time (1415). Metaphorically she has moved 'inside' this house full of death and her reporting of the mayhem within is a reminder of her previous broadcasting of the ills of the house.[135] Now, however, as an accomplice in the evil and not its victim she has slipped into her mother's role. When Aigisthos returns he remarks on the change in Elektra's manner (1456) and she confirms her new-found duplicity (1464–5), but the full impact of this reversal of roles is realised visually and spatially by Aigisthos' command for the doors of the *skene* to be opened (1458).[136] All Argives and Mykenaians, or all Athenians in the Theatre of Dionysos, are called upon to see. The inside world of the *skene* is brought outside, its hidden actions exposed not just verbally but physically. The urn emerges from the *skene* in the form of the corpse of Klytaimnestra. Klytaimnestra visually occupies that space 'outside' that was formerly the province of Elektra.

The transformation of the urn into the corpse is effected by Sophokles himself.[137] Elektra appears to have the urn in mind when she speaks of the visible evidence of Orestes' death that has come with the false story (1453),[138] but Aigisthos imagines that it is the corpse of Orestes that he is about to see (1461). The transformation is necessary to the plausibility and suspense of the plot as Aigisthos discovers a corpse that will not endorse his power but will destroy it; but the corpse must also surprise and shock the spectators. The appearance of revenge through the trick of the urn, a deception in which the spectators with their superior knowledge of Orestes' plot are complicit, is shown for the matricide it really is. Not only is the deceptive urn transformed, but the beloved head of the son is overlayed by the face/mask (πρόσωπον) of the mother. Indeed, the "beloved head" helps

[135] Although Elektra physically enters the house at 1383, her return outside to report and direct the matricide within heightens the sense of her mental commitment to and engagement with the violence.

[136] On the ambiguities of *skene* door and *ekkyklema* see Padel (1990) 354–61.

[137] Kamerbeek (1974) at line 1453 writes, "Thus Aegisthus is led to believe that Orestes' dead body is present (a trick of the dramatist, no such guile had been prearranged by Electra and Orestes)".

[138] Elektra may also be thinking of the "living" Orestes as March (2001) ad loc. proposes, but the object of both the report and what has been shown is the dead Orestes (θανόντ', 1452) who, for the spectators and Elektra, is represented by the urn.

to effect this transition by already implying a face to the urn. 'Head' can be metonymous for 'corpse' as I suggested above with reference to the head/corpse of Aigisthos in Euripides *Elektra*. Not that it is not the corpse of Klytaimnestra that emerges from the *ekkyklema* but that in the mind's eye of the spectators there may be an image metaphor between the beloved head/face and the hated face/mask, with the corresponding conceptual clash between love and revenge. This focus on the face/mask of Klytaimnestra rather than her corpse is indicated by Aigisthos' order—"Undo all the coverings from her eyes" (χαλᾶτε πᾶν κάλυμμ' ἀπ' ὀφθαλμῶν, 1468; Plate II.iii). The 'eyes' emphasise the sense of sight and suggest not only a true identification of the corpse but the revelation of the truth of the situation to Aigisthos, and, at another level, to the spectators. For this transformation from urn to beloved head to eyes/face/mask/corpse brings a "tangible reality" to revenge that can arouse their emotions in abhorrence and even guilt.[139] The overlaying and reconstrual of the urn image can also encourage a cognitive reappraisal of the solution to which the urn has contributed. The urn's various manifestations create points of comparison which can give rise to hypothesis. Pivotal to the cognitive conflict and novelty which can stimulate the use of images is Elektra's lament and the reconceptualisation of a vehicle of deceit into a vehicle of love. In this way, Sophokles does not allow the straight course of his revenge play to go unchallenged emotionally or cognitively. One further superimposition refers back to the relationship between urn and tomb which has underpinned the play. In this final instance the relationship is not with an imagined tomb but involves the imagistic and semantic associations between the urn and the *skene*.

Urn—tomb
(Plate II.iv)

A variety of Greek words have been used to denote the urn throughout the play but Elektra's term at the climactic point of her lament

[139] Segal (1981) 289 comments on this movement toward "tangible reality" in terms of the succession of deceptions: the false story of the paidagogos, the visible urn with its "fictitious ashes" and the corpse of Klytaimnestra. He does not, however, see the urn as continuing to play a role in this final scene: "For the last act of deception in the play, namely the tricking and killing of Aegisthos, the urn is abandoned" (288).

is unusual (1165–7).[140] This is the only instance in the extant works of Sophokles where στέγος refers figuratively to an urn.[141] At the same time στέγος carries its more usual connotation of a house. The ashes of Elektra and Orestes, mixed in the small 'house' of the urn, will keep them together in the house of Hades. Other uses of related forms of στέγος associate 'house' and 'tomb'. Khrysothemis describes the tomb-like cavern planned for Elektra as a στέγη (382; cf. S. *Ant.* 888, 1100); Orestes speaks of the urn 'housing' his body (τόδ' ἄγγος... στέγον, 1118); and Klytaimnestra's failure to enjoy sleep that will 'cover' (στεγάζειν, 781) her recalls the tomblike 'covering' of her dream—the overshadowing sceptre of Orestes (419–23). Elsewhere in the *Elektra* στέγη occurs in contexts which vindicate that opening epithet for the palace at Mykenai: πολύφθορόν...δῶμα (10) "a house rife with death". Elektra bemoans the sight of the monthly feast in the house to commemorate the treacherous murder of her father (282). Aigisthos' absence from the palace is opportune for the avengers (1308). In its final four instances στέγη and its forms evoke images of the stealth, revenge, hiddenness, bloodshed (1386, 1392), matricide (1404) and "evils both present and future of the house of Pelops" (τά τ' ὄντα καὶ μέλλοντα Πελοπιδῶν κακά, 1498). The *skene* represents this στέγη, a theatre-sized image of what in miniature is conveyed by the urn, and a microcosm itself of ancient Argos or of fifth-century Athens.

With the opening of the *skene* doors the illusion of the urn is broken. The hidden evils of the house are exposed and the movement from outside to inside is reversed. The recognition scene with Aigisthos slows down the momentum toward further violence as have the previous recognition scenes (between Elektra and Orestes and between Elektra and the Paidagogos) allowing at least the possibility of a change of direction. But again the avengers are drawn back inside the *skene*. Previously, the urn had been sent within to disarm Klytaimnestra. Then Orestes, Pylades and Elektra had gone inside and Elektra returned after the Khoros had sung the Third Stasimon (1384–1397), the grim ode that described the nature of revenge under its patron deities Ares (τὸ δυσέριστον αἷμα φυσῶν, 1385 "who breathes blood-lust in unholy

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[140] τὸ στέγος (1165). Other words denoting the urn include: τὸ τύπωμα (54), ὁ χαλκός (758), τὸ τεῦχος (1114, 1120), τὸ ἄγγος (1118, 1205), τὸ κύτος (1142) ὁ λέβης (1401).

[141] See Ellendt *Lexicon Sophocleum* (1958) *s.v.* "Στέγος". Cf. discussion above in Introduction, section II, *Mental images*, Figurative language.

strife") and Hermes (δόλον σκότῳ/κρύψας, 1396–7, "who hid treachery in darkness"). This time the victim of vengeance, Aigisthos, is visible in the acting-area, and the sort of the rough justice he is to meet is made clear. He does not "rush unsuspecting into the ordeal to which justice brings him" as the Khoros had hoped (1440),[142] but calls this justice into question. As a condemned man he asks for the right to speak (1482–3). Elektra answers this request by referring to him in the third person in a series of commands to Orestes: "Don't allow him to speak" (μὴ…λέγειν ἔα, 1483), "Kill him as quickly as possible" (ὡς τάχιστα κτεῖνε, 1487), and "Lay him out…far away from our sight" (πρόθες/…//ἄποπτον ἡμῶν, 1487–9). "This alone," she says, "would be a release from past wrongs" (1489–90). Whether she is calling for the mutilation of Aigisthos' corpse by birds and animals of prey, or for the exclusion of his corpse in an act of purification is unclear.[143] Her final urgent imperatives and their justification reflect a sudden exhaustion of her passion for revenge at the moment of its consummation.[144]

Although Elektra has helped to draw Aigisthos into the snare (1436; 1476), unlike her mother in a comparable deceit (A. *Ag.* 1382–87), Elektra will not complete the act. And although Orestes shall commit the murder, even he is of secondary importance in a final scene which places the victim, Aigisthos, at its centre. So Elektra falls silent and Orestes plays out the poetic justice of an execution not in public but in the dark inside the house (1493–4), in the same place where Agamemnon died (1496). Thus the movement at the end of the play is back inside the *skene*.

If the image of the urn is associated with the diminishing of the personal potential of Orestes and Elektra, the assimilation of the urn with the *skene* conveys the wider implications of their revenge—that by emancipating the house of Atreus from violence their revenge has added more violence to a house already πολύφθορόν (10) "rife with death". The desolation at the end of the play, Elektra's silence and Orestes' simplistic and immoral remedy for the law-breaker (κτείνειν, 1507, "to kill him"), further emphasise the paradox of the "freedom" which the Khoros say

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142 Translation by March (2001) ad loc.

143 For the first interpretation see Jebb (1894) at line 1488, for the second, Burnett (1998) 135–6. Cf. E. *El.* 896–8, and March (2001) at line 1488.

144 I cannot find the spirit of "fierce and triumpant joy" that March (2001) at line 1490 finds in Elektra at this point.

their violence has achieved (1508–10). Indeed Elektra's wish during her lament over the urn appears to have reached fulfillment: σὺ δέξαι μ' ἐς τὸ σὸν τόδε στέγος (1165) "Welcome me into this your house". She and Orestes have achieved what the trick of the urn promised, but in their achievement they will enter a tomb of their own making, represented by the *skene* (Plate II.iv). How far the rest of the sentence can apply to Elektra's situation at the end of the play—τὴν μηδὲν ἐς τὸ μηδέν, ὡς σὺν σοὶ κάτω/ναίω τὸ λοιπόν (1166–7) "nothing to nothing, that with you below I may live the future"—is left to the spectators to decide, but it is tempting to extend the image of the urn not only to the *skene* and the house of Atreus but to the house of Hades.

In Orestes' plans the urn has only negative connotations of deceit and the taking of revenge on Klytaimnestra. But what makes the urn significant in a drama which has Elektra as its tragic hero is the urn's positive connotation of her love for her brother. This connotation is absent from the end of the play. As Elektra increasingly adopts the δόλος (deceit) of her mother and her brother she becomes increasingly extraneous to the plot.[145] In her laments which kept alive the memory of her father and through which she would unite with the ashes of her brother she was potent. Her final silence and her place outside the action during the execution of revenge suggest that, above all, the empty urn represents Elektra herself. She arouses our pity for the undeserved misfortune of being the innocent victim of her mother's revenge on her father, but even more for the contamination of her openness which Orestes' plans persuade her to adopt. The universal symbol, the funerary urn, which best represents her function in lament, is appropriated by Orestes and his idiosyncratic use of this very symbol to represent deceitful revenge.[146] This play has been carefully structured to convey the retributive justice of Elektra and Orestes' revenge, and yet it also conveys the tragedy of Elektra. The success of revenge in this case undermines itself and contributes to a view of revenge as tragic.

I have argued that the urn as a mental image and as a visually perceived prop helps the play "wear its meaning". One way the urn does this is through the reconstrual and superimposition of urn images

[145] Cf. Rehm (1996) 57–9.

[146] On the universalising and idiosyncratic image see above in Introduction, section III, *Image, word and memory*; and Paivio (1983a) 13.

which can invite the spectators to reason through these images. The funerary urn (ἐκεῖνο) is an image stored in the spectators' long-term memory of what they have seen before (προεωρακώς). It is an emotive object which is associated with death, tomb, and lament. It refers in the play to Orestes' urn (τοῦτο) in an uneasy relationship that overlays the spectators' genuine experiences and emotions with its own deceitful purpose. In particular, this urn is not intended to bring the social cohesion of state burials but to support private vendetta.

When the urn is brought into the acting area as a visible prop the tension between a genuine urn and a bogus urn is maximised. Elektra's lament for her brother, supposedly a young hero, fixes the original mental image of the spectators to the visually perceived image of the urn at a point in the play when it is most deeply affecting. Elektra succeeds in supplanting the fictitious associations of the urn with her genuine feelings and seals this transformation by reconstruing the urn as the beloved head. Her 'true' story is as engaging as the 'false' story of the Paidagogos. The visual presence of the urn and the power of her genuine lament overrides the presence of Orestes asserting its fiction. If the Paidagogos' story made Elektra irrelevant, her own story makes Orestes irrelevant. In this scene the urn is most potently a cue to the dichotomies of the play: lament and revenge, female and male, openness and hiddenness, love and hate.

The reconstrual of the urn into the beloved head is a reminder for the spectators of their own lived grief, and also of the subverting of genuine lament by its capacity to stir up revenge. Only when she has abandoned hope of revenge is Elektra capable of lament in the epic tradition of Andromakhe, Hekabe and Helen for Hektor (*Il.* 24.723–75), and in a manner which is a rebuff to the model offered by the vengeance-seeking Khoephoroi. The subsequent mapping of the beloved head onto the mask of Klytaimnestra draws together in a spatial congruence the conceptual incongruencies of love and hate, genuine lament and revenge. There is no shared ground between these pairs of elements as there is between deceit and revenge, or between death and lament. By creating an image metaphor that is conceptually paradoxical, that is, the beloved one is the hated one, Sophokles invites a blending of 'two packets of meaning'. Such a blend is outside the scope of the protagonists of the play who *reproduce* the revenge patterns of the past. But the opportunity is there for the spectators to exercise the productive *thinking* which, as Kaufmann proposes, images facilitate

in situations of novelty and cognitive conflict.[147] The spectators even have an heroic precedent in Akhilleus' novel blend of a parallel metaphor. Through the shared ground of old age he maps the beloved one (Peleus) onto the hated one (Priam) and arrives at the truly remarkable insight of reconciliation.[148]

Sophokles, on the other hand, is creating tragedy, and the positives—the potential of Elektra and Orestes, the wealth of Mykenai—are a foil to the dominant imagery of the tomb. The final assimilation of the urn with the *skene*, the murder of Aigisthos, which will fictionally take place there after the play has finished, the slow drawing of Orestes back inside and the unspoken expectation that Elektra will join him are all suggestive of a return to the conventional metaphor for Mykenai as πολύφθορόν…δῶμα, "a house rife with death".

For the spectators returning to their own funerary practices the story of Elektra is a salutary one. It has touched on some of their deepest emotions, the love and hate associated with violence, grief, and loss. At the same time the image of the urn and its transformations may have challenged them to think, to see in the paradoxical congruence of the object of love and the object of hate not only the negative reciprocity of retribution but also the opportunity for the sort of positive reciprocity exercised in a different genre by Akhilleus. Finally, the superimposing of urn, head, mask and *skene* door reflects the circularity of revenge, a movement from tomb to tomb that seems to embrace the living as well as the dead (Plate II.v).

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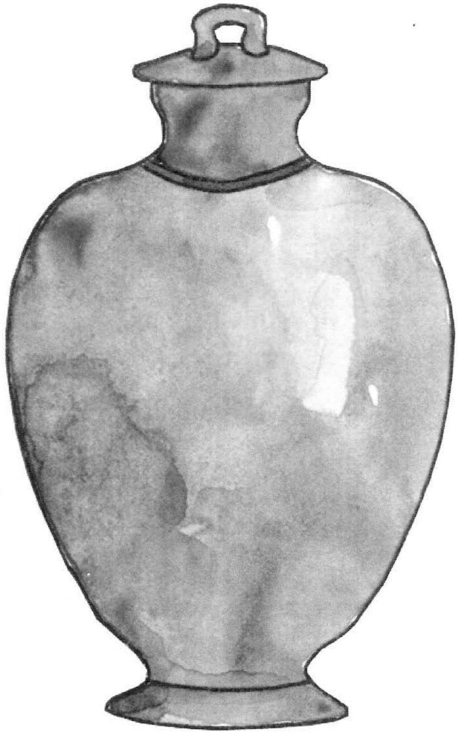
[147] See Figure 1 and discussion above in Introduction, section III, *Image and word.*

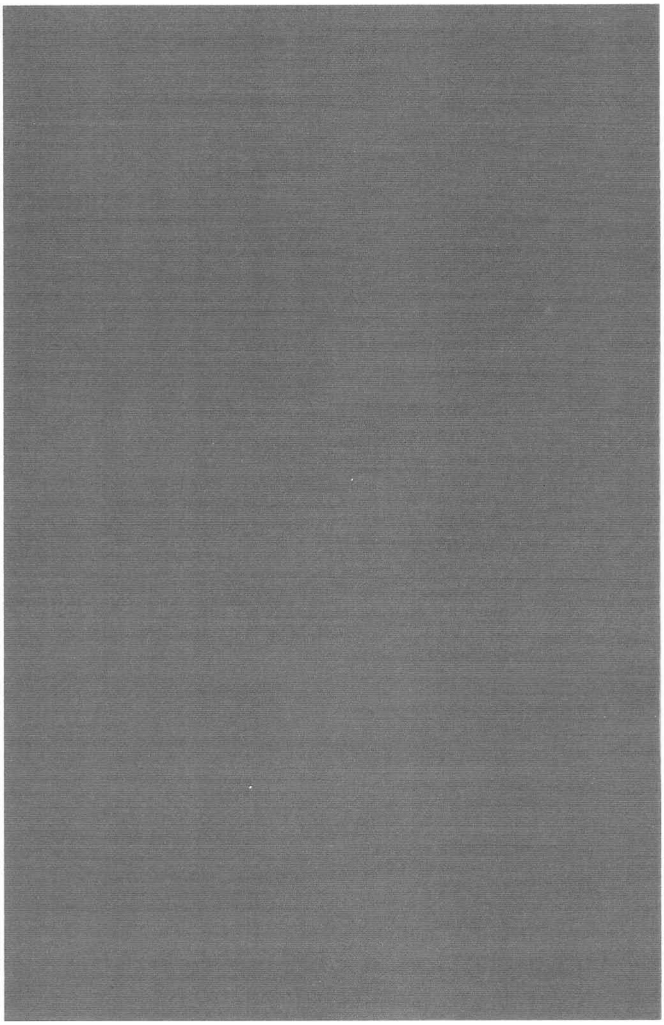
[148] See above in Introduction, section I, *Aristophanes' Frogs, Aristotle's katharsis and the cognitive appeal of tragedy.*



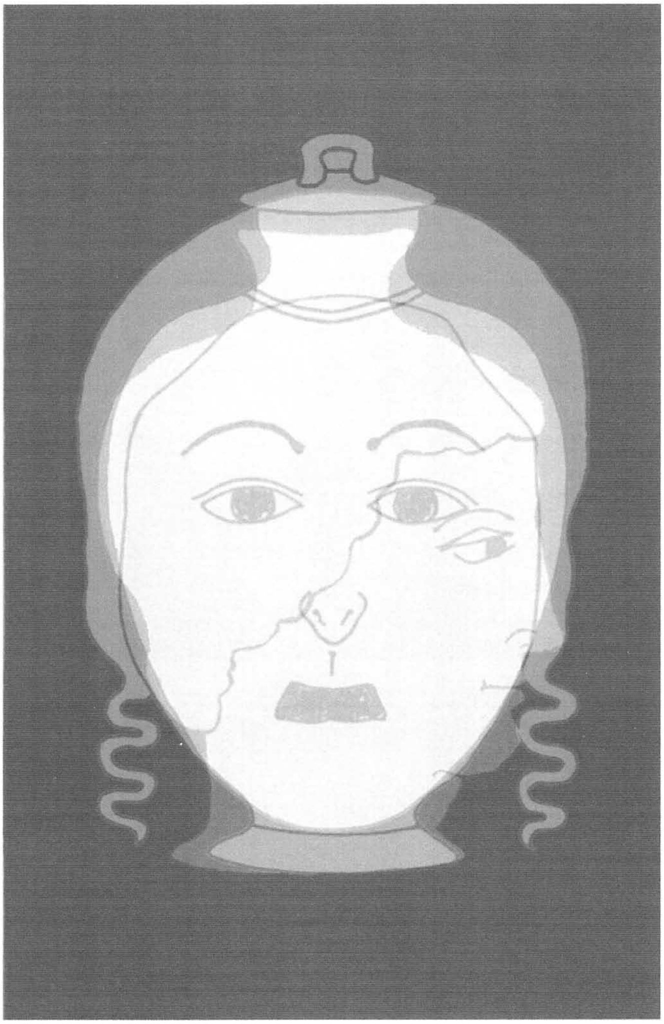
II.i The urn
τύπωμα χαλκόπλευρον
(S. *El.* 54)

II.ii O Brotherly head
ὦ κασίγνητον κάρα
(S. *El.* 1164)

II.iii Mask of Klytaimnestra
χαλᾶτε πᾶν κάλυμμ' ἀπ' ὀφθαλμῶν
(S. *El.* 1468)



II.iv Tomb



II.v Superimposed images

CHAPTER THREE

THE MASK OF DIONYSOS: EURIPIDES, *BAKKHAI*

After the conspicuously imported prop images which we have considered, the shield and the urn, the mask of Dionysos in Euripides' *Bakkhai* may appear scarcely to qualify as a prop but rather to belong to the regular apparatus of dramatic performance. Its appearance as an anomaly among tragic masks—a smiling face (E. *Ba*. 439, 1021)—together with its transformation by means of masks within the play, can make it, however, an object of *opsis* which invites a 'reasoning through imagery'. Unlike the mask of Oidipous (S. *OT*), which may be changed at the end of the play to represent Oidipous' self-blinding, the mask of Dionysos wins the attention of the spectator from the beginning and functions as a central prop and dominant image. Where this prop differs in particular from those we have previously considered is in its extended visibility throughout the play (a visibility appropriate to a god who is characterised in vase painting by his frontal "*regard,*")[1] and in the visual explicitness of the transformation: the smiling mask of Dionysos to the tragic mask of Pentheus. Euripides does not so much surprise us in the recognition that 'this is that' but rather the surprise is in the insight that this and that are an inseparable pair. In the *Bakkhai* Euripides uses the generic mask and its transformation as a cue to the ambiguity of the god. Given the doublings that characterise the play, even to Euripides' suggestive mix of genres through the inclusion of the humorous (γελοῖα),[2] his choice of prop—drawn from theatre itself—is a miracle of economy and condensation, a deceptively simple cue to memory and an image on which to build comparisons and anticipations.[3]

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1 Frontisi-Ducroux (1991) 177.

2 For discussions of γελοῖα in Euripides see Seidensticker (1978) 303–20 (1982) 89–241, Taplin (1986) 163–74 (1996) 188–202, Michelini (1987) 66–8, Gregory (1999–2000) 59–74, Muecke (1982) 17–34. Cf. Segal (1982) 244–64, Goldhill (1986) 262–3, Csapo (1997) 280. More generally on the question of genre in Euripides, see Mastronarde (1999–2000) 23–39.

3 For the use of imagery in comparisons and anticipations see Kaufmann (1988) 233–4, and above in Introduction, section III, *Image, word and thinking*, Comparison and anticipation.

In the discussion of the *Bakkhai* which follows I shall again use the structure of chapters one and two, considering first the spectators' prior visual familiarity (προεωρακώς) with Dionysos and his worship, then the relation of the prop and the play, and finally a discussion of the transformations of the mask—through image and concept—[4] during the course of the play. Where the urn/head/mask of the *Elektra* is a vehicle in a one-to-one relation/mapping with its abstract topics of death/deceit/revenge, the mask as vehicle in the *Bakkhai* relates in each of its transformations to at least two topics.[5] First, as I argue below, the play invites a same-shape/image mapping between the mask of the god of cult, the *thyrsos*, the smiling mask of the Stranger/Dionysos of the play, and the tragic mask of Pentheus (see Plates III.i–iv at end of chapter). The first of these is a mental image, whereas the other three are visually perceived in the course of the play.[6] Secondly, these elements map onto pairs of abstract and paradoxical topics. The image of the god of cult maps onto worship and retribution, the *thyrsos* relates to dance and to violence, the image of the Stranger maps onto both delight and delusion, and the mask of Pentheus relates finally to sanity and suffering. The doubleness and ambiguity of the Dionysos of the play, θεὸς/δεινότατος, ἀνθρώποισι δ' ἠπιώτατος (860–1) "a god most terrible, but to man most gentle", is not new to the spectators, as we shall see when we examine below the images of the god which the spectators may bring to the performance.

προεωρακώς

Carpenter lists three categories of representations of Dionysos available to the fifth-century Athenian spectator: "the mythic, the cultic and the comic".[7] The beardless god of myth was an image familiar from

[4] The generic mask undergoes transformations through image mappings and through mappings between the concepts symbolised by those images. For simpler examples of image and conceptual mappings see above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Conceptual metaphor and Image metaphor.

[5] For the terms vehicle and topic see Lakoff (1993) 206–7, and above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Conceptual metaphor.

[6] Segal (1982) 249 and Goldhill (1986) 261 comment on the contrast between the visually perceived images of the masks of Dionysos and Pentheus, but do not extend this shape to the remembered mask of cult and to the 'head' of the *thyrsos*. For the relation between Pentheus and the *thyrsos* see Kalke (1985). Cf. Segal (1997) 372–3.

[7] Carpenter (1997) 105.

sculpture on the east pediment and east frieze of the Parthenon.[8] In the last quarter of the fifth century the beardless Dionysos was also depicted on vases by the Dinos painter.[9] The mature god of cult was a familiar image from the spectators' own religious participation in Dionysiac cult, as well as from vase paintings which represented the god by a bearded mask mounted on a column. This scene, featured on the black-figured *lekythoi* and the red-figured *stamnoi* known as the Lenaia vases, is possibly indicative of Dionysiac worship.[10] Plate III.i below is adapted from the marble mask of Ikaria, a later, more durable form of the column mask than that depicted in black-figured and red-figured vase paintings.[11] The third category, Dionysos the effeminate clown, was familiar to the spectators particularly through old comedy. Although produced after the *Bakkhai* (407–406 BC)[12] Aristophanes' *Frogs* (405 BC)[13] provides an image of the feminised Dionysos in saffron gown (κροκωτῷ, 46).[14]

Foley adds two further categories of representation familiar to the spectators: Dionysos the beast-god,[15] and Dionysos the patron of the theatrical festival.[16] The latter is the Dionysos who can bridge comedy and tragedy, and whose own festival pattern of "*pompe, agon* and *komos*",[17] a pattern found in the structure of old comedy, is also recognisable, Foley argues, in the *Bakkhai*.[18] Seaford relates this structure

[8] C. Gasparri *LIMC III.1* and *2* (1986) *s.v.* "Dionysos" cat. nos 486 and 493: 1.465, 2.356. Cf. Carpenter (1997) 85–92. For discussion against identifying the 'Dionysos' figure of the east pediment with Herakles see Boardman in Boardman and Finn (1985) 230 and Hurwit (1999) 178.

[9] Carpenter (1997) 98–103. Cf. Carpenter (1993) 185–206.

[10] For discussions of the Lenaia Vases and their relevance as evidence of the cult worship of Dionysos, see Frontisi-Ducroux (1991) 17–174, Carpenter (1997) 79–82, Osborne (1997) 204–211, Peirce (1998) 59–95, Hamilton (2003) 48–68.

[11] See Wrede (1928) 75–6 and Plates 21.3 and 22.2. In colour Plate III.i is adapted from archaic terracotta masks of Dionysos found in Boeotian graves (see Wrede [1928] 90). This type of mask, which continued into the fifth century, had a red face and yellow hair and beard.

[12] Dodds (1960) xxxix.

[13] K. Dover *OCD* (1996) *s.v.* "Aristophanes" 164.

[14] Carpenter [1997] 107 and n. 15.

[15] Foley (1980) 133 at n. 43. For an illustration of the *kalpis* singled out by Foley for its representation of the dual nature of Dionysos in masks of the anthropomorphised god and the beast-god see Boardman (1975) 35 and illustration 44, Beazley no. 200171. On the "theriomorphic" Dionysos see also Winnington-Ingram (1948) 29–30.

[16] Foley (1980) 116–26.

[17] See Sourvinou-Inwood (2003) 69–70, and Pickard-Cambridge (1968) 61–3.

[18] Foley (1980) 116–9 (1985) 208–17. Cf. Friedrich (1996) 279 n. 28, Kavoulaki (1999) 309–313.

to the sacrifice which completes the rites for the initiand into the Dionysiac mysteries.[19] In the *Bakkhai*, Seaford argues, the spectators will recognise elements of this initiatory pattern in the trials which Pentheus undergoes at the hand of the god.[20] Thus aspects of the god present in the *Bakkhai*—the mature, the young, the comic, the feminised, and the bestial, as well as the structure of his festival and even possibly the rites of his mystic initiation—can all map onto what is conventional and familiar to the spectators through their knowledge of myth, cult, festival and mystic ritual, and theatre.

Even the more exotic images of myth found in the *Bakkhai* are identified by Carpenter as already familiar to the spectators through the visual arts. These images include the *sparagmos* of animals,[21] and of Pentheus,[22] and depictions of snake-handling Mainads.[23] Of the Mainads' identifying accoutrements, the wreath of ivy is most commonly represented, followed by the *thyrsos*.[24] The fawn skin which features in the *Bakkhai* is not an invariable attribute in art.

Into this world of Dionysiac 'conventions', Euripides introduces the smiling mask. Do the spectators, as Foley and Goldhill propose, understand the smiling mask as a "theatrical cue" which "identifies [Dionysos]... as a divinity in disguise",[25] or does the smiling mask refer, for the spectators as for the characters and Khoros of the play, to the human Stranger? This theatrical ambiguity about the face of Dionysos compounds the complexity of his already multi-faceted representation in art, cult and festival. Euripides' particularising of the god's mask in the *Bakkhai* creates a curiosity about this image and about the way in which the mask, as a visible object, may become a focus for meaning in the play.

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[19] Seaford (1994) 274–5, 284–5.

[20] Seaford (1981) 252–63. Cf. Bierl (1991) 208–9, Segal (1997) 353–6.

[21] Carpenter (1997) 114.

[22] Carpenter (1997) 116–7.

[23] Carpenter (1997) 109–11.

[24] Among the Lenaia vases, on the other hand, there are no *thyrsoi* featured on the *lekythoi*. Hamilton (2003) 63 explains this absence: "The thyrsos seems to be a way of identifying a scene as Dionysiac and so is not necessary when the idol is present; the few times it occurs with the idol can be explained as 'overdetermination' ".

[25] Goldhill (1986) 260. Foley (1980) 128, 132. Cf. Frontisi-Ducroux (1991) 227, Gredley (1996) 214 n. 2. In the *Homeric Hymn to Dionysos* 7.14–15 the helmsman appears to recognise the god by the smile in his eyes (ὁ δὲ μειδιάων ἐκάθητο/ὄμμασι κυανέοισι). Against the 'smiling' mask see Wiles (2007) 221–2.

At the same time, this smiling mask of the god faces the spectators in the manner of the Dionysos pillar-masks represented particularly on the later Lenaia vases, the red-figured *stamnoi* which are dated on the whole between 460–440 BC, but which also include one from around 420 BC.[26] Tragic masked performance, as recent productions and studies confirm, requires the mask to be frontal, fixing the spectator with its gaze, and facilitating the projection of the voice through the open mouth cavity.[27] With the theatrical Dionysos mask facing them like a cult mask the spectators may resemble the viewers of the *stamnoi*, not merely regarding the god's effect on his worshippers but drawn into that experience themselves. In cult, Osborne suggests, the devotee is encouraged to "become one" with the god.[28] Further, as Frontisi-Ducroux notes, even though the dramatic mask is of a young beardless man with fair curls as opposed to the darkly bearded face of the cult god, the smiling face can recall to the Athenian "la face familière du masque au pilier, plutôt bienveillante, ou les figures énigmatiques, voire ironiques, qui décorent la panse des amphores et des cratères".[29] By such superimposing of the theatrical mask on the cult mask we create an image metaphor, a spatial relationship between two images which can lead to "new, emergent meaning".[30] This meaning is constrained by the further superimposition of the image of the *thyrsos*—a symbol of the power of the god and his worshippers—and that of the head/mask of Pentheus.

A *thyrsos* is described as a "rod of fennel surmounted by a pine-cone entwined with ivy or vines",[31] or it may be simply a giant fennel whose 'head' is embellished with ivy.[32] Either way it has the shape, as we see in vase paintings, of a head on a pole. This, as we have seen above on the Lenaia vases, is also the shape under which Dionysos is worshipped in cult—a single mask/head or two facing in opposite directions—[33]

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[26] See Osborne (1997) 204, and Carpenter (1997) 93–7.

[27] Wiles (2007) 138, McCart (2007) 247–9.

[28] Osborne (1997) 209–10 at 209.

[29] Frontisi-Ducroux (1991) 227. Cf. Steiner (2001) 176–7.

[30] Turner (2002) 10. On the usefulness of the "spatial properties and relationships" of images in thinking see Richardson (1983) 212. Cf. Richardson (1999) 24–6, and above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, "Multiple meanings" in image shape.

[31] See the glossary of Bérard, Bron, et al. (1989) 170.

[32] Kalke (1985) 409.

[33] The two masks may recall the opposites found in Dionysos, his old and young appearance and the happiness and belligerence which can be the effects of wine (see Diodoros 4.5.3–4, and Csapo [1997] 255).

attached to a pillar. In some paintings the pillar is clothed in a robe flowing from the mask. Given that Dionysos in the play may be robed in a flowing *peplos* similiar to that which he later prescribes for Pentheus (βυσσίνους πέπλους, 821, "a fine linen robe") the mapping between the theatre image of the god and his cult image may include not only a superimposing of the smiling mask onto the cult mask, but of the costume of the Lydian Stranger onto the remembered effigies of Dionysos associated with art and cult.

The Pentheus head/mask carried into the acting-area by Agave and attached to her *thyrsos* similarly resonates with the mask-column iconography of Dionysos, tragic inversion though it is. We are reminded that the Khoros in the Second Stasimon call upon Dionysos: "Come, my lord, down from Olympos, brandishing your golden-faced *thyrsos*" (χρυσῶπα.../θύρσον, 553–4). Their imagery brings the god into contrast with the "wild-faced monster" by which they have just designated Pentheus (ἀγριωπὸν τέρας, 542), and looks forward to what we could call Agave's wild-faced *thyrsos*.[34] The personification of the *thyrsos* and the power that comes with its garlanding is reflected in the language of the Second Messenger describing the activities of the Theban Mainads (1054–5). Their *thyrsos* has lost its "hair" (κομήτην, 1055).[35] In a bizarre inversion of this scene the superimposing of the image of the garlanded *thyrsos* and the staked head of Pentheus is emphasised by Agave's reference to his head/mask as a "newly-cut tendril" (ἕλικα νεότομον, 1170).[36]

This series of same-shape images from the god of cult through to the tragic victim Pentheus, cued by the smiling mask of the god in the play, may contribute to a reappraisal by the spectators of the ambiguity of absolute power. Such a conjecture may represent one of a number of target domains applicable to the source domain that is the play. Osborne interprets the *Bakkhai* as an extension at the end of the fifth century of what the Lenaia vases had represented throughout the century, an attempt by Euripides to defamiliarise ecstatic cult which was at home in Athenian society, and to help Athenians "to see just how

[34] Agave calls Pentheus a θῆρ' (1108) "beast", and understands his head to be that of a lion (1142).

[35] On the significance of hair in the play, cf. 150, 185, 235, 241, 493–4, 695, 831, 928, 1115. On "crowning with ivy" see Segal (1982) 46–8, Kalke (1985) 410, 412–3.

[36] See Dodds (1960) note at lines 1169–71, Kalke (1985) 420.

shocking were the rituals to which they were accustomed".[37] This interpretation points to a target domain in religious extremism. The defamiliarising of their god (by means of the smiling mask) in the midst of what is most proper to him, his cult, his festival, and his theatre, on the other hand, may point to an analogue in more universally shocking behaviour to which Athens has grown accustomed—her imperialism. The use of imagery in such an exploration is appropriate to its novelty and to the cognitive conflict to which it gives rise,[38] particularly in an Athens which in 405–404 BC was to witness the ambiguity of her power, in relation to her allies, resolving itself in her defeat.[39] One wonders, for example, whether, at the production of the *Bakkhai* there would have been a noticeably depleted display of tribute, prior to the dramatic competition, or none at all.[40] Xenophon finds Athens' fault in her hubris (διὰ τὴν ὕβριν, *Hell.* 2.2.10) a term echoed throughout the *Bakkhai* and applied to Dionysos (247), to Pentheus (375, 516, 555), and to that instrument of Dionysiac power, the *thyrsos* itself (113).[41]

The series of images, I shall argue, in the end leaves no room for illusion and escape, for losing oneself in the gaze of the masked god either in cult or in theatre; on the contrary, one 'emergent meaning' of the images is of confrontation with a delusion inherent in the exercise of power, namely the failure to recognise the interchangeability between victor and victim.[42] Euripides creates this double experience of victor and victim for his spectators by engaging their sympathies at different times with both Dionysos and Pentheus,[43] and he anchors

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[37] Osborne (1997) 211. Cf. Winnington-Ingram (1948) 150–2, Kalke (1985) 425–6. For interpretations of the *Bakkhai* along religious and political lines, see Foley (1985) 205 and bibliography at n. 1. Cf. Segal (1997) 356–9.

[38] Cf. above in Introduction, section III, *Image, word and thinking*, Novelty and conflict.

[39] This ambiguity is registered, among other things, in the tributes Athens levied on her allies, and her uncompromising response to defection (Th. 1.98–9). The violence of her treatment of subject and non-subject states is held up by Xenophon (*Hell.* 2.2.3) as a measure of what she had to fear in defeat. The states he names are Melos (cf. Th. 5.116), Hestiaia (cf. Th. 1.114), Skione (cf. Th. 5.32), Torone (cf. Th. 5.3), and Aigina (cf. Th. 2.27).

[40] For this part of the proceedings at the City Dionysia see Pickard-Cambridge (1968) 59, 67.

[41] For further instances in the *Bakkhai* see 9, 743, 779, 1297, 1311, 1347. Cf. Kalke (1985) 423–4. On the violent *thyrsos*, see Seaford (1996a) note at 113–4, and discussion below in this chapter, The *thyrsos*: dance and violence.

[42] In Euripides' *Troiades* Croally (1994) 127–32 also identifies, particularly in Kassandra's speech, the poet's questioning of the status of victor and victim.

[43] See Segal (1997) 386.

the experience in the spectators' own familiarity with the Dionysiac. This 'emergent meaning'—the nexus between victor and victim—is generic and can map onto a variety of situations.[44] To this extent the mapping proposed here of Athens' imperialism and her defeat in the Peloponnesian war is arbitrary, although applicable to those events as Thoukydides and Xenophon describe them. Although he does not include the *Bakkhai* in his list of nine Euripidean plays which "comment on war",[45] Vellacott makes a strong case for reading Euripides "in close and constant comparison" with Thoukydides' History.[46] The proximity of the date of the production of the *Bakkhai* (407–406 BC) to the end of the war (404 BC), and the tradition that Euripides left Athens for Macedonia (where he wrote the play) are suggestive that the fortunes of Athens were not far from the poet's mind.[47] His other late plays, *Phoinissai* (409 BC), *Orestes* (c. 408 BC) and *Iphigeneia in Aulis* (408–406 BC) all treat aspects of war.[48] Athens' demography late in the war may also be reflected in the Thebes of the *Bakkhai*, a city populated by old men and women. The absence of young male warriors is highlighted by the two candidates for that role, the effeminate Dionysos and the ineffectual Pentheus.[49] If Athens had witnessed in Euripides' *Troiades* (415 BC) an expression of her power as victor cued by her suppression of Melos (416–415 BC),[50] or in *Helen* (412 BC) allusion to a futile war fought for an *eidolon* or cloud (707) in the aftermath of the failed Sicilian expedition (413 BC),[51] then in the *Bakkhai*

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[44] Cf. Turner (1996) 3–11, and above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Blending.

[45] Vellacott (1975) ch. 6.

[46] Vellacott (1975) 177.

[47] For argument against the biographical tradition see Scullion (2003) 389–400. Scullion argues from the inconsistency between the tradition and Aristophanes' presentation of Euripides in *Frogs* in 405 BC.

[48] Cf. Vellacott (1975) 167–9, 173–7.

[49] Pentheus appears to have an army at his disposal but fails to mobilise it as he threatens to do following the first messenger's speech (780–6, 845), and instead of putting on his own armour allows Dionysos to dress him as a woman (809, 914–5). See also the second messenger's response to the anarchy of the Khoros at 1036: Θήβας δ' ἀνάνδρους ὧδ' ἄγεις...; "Do you think that Thebes is so wanting in men...?".

[50] On the relation of Melos to *Troiades* see van Erp Taalman Kip (1987) 414–9, Croally (1994) 232–4, Kuch (1998) 147–53.

[51] Cf. Vellacott (1975) 166–7, Whitman (1974) 51. Dale (1967) xii comments that there is "only one line in the play"—707—which makes explicit that the Phrygians and Akhaians died for a phantom. She says that if the Trojan war were fought for a phantom it would make a "dour reflection for Athens in 412 BC", but that even in the Khoros' lament for the "folly of war" (1151–64) in the First Stasimon (1107–64) there is no mention of a phantom. Dale does not refer in her discussion of strophe α and its

Athens may recognise the ambiguity of her absolute power cued by the ambiguity of Dionysos, as well as the possibility of her dissolution in defeat mirrored in the *sparagmos* of Pentheus.[52] Before considering the progression of images and their connections with the ambiguous and paradoxical characteristics of the god, I turn to that central prop, the smiling mask, and its integration in the play.

Prop and play

The mask of Dionysos is a prop which does not, as does the shield or the urn, relate in a concrete way through imagery and space to the larger framework of the play. Although the smiling mask is the cue to the series of image metaphors outlined above, its relation to the play is abstract, a symbol of illusion and delusion, of a failure to 'see'. As if to compound this failure, which underpins the tragic outcome, the poet accentuates the visible features of the mask. Such accentuating contrasts with the poet's neglect of any elaboration on how Dionysos looks in general apart from describing him as a foreigner from Lydia (233–4). His dress could reflect the east in the manner of that of the Khoros in Aiskhylos' *Persai* or the Envoy in Aristophanes' *Akharnes*, or recall the flowing robes of cult effigies, or even be, as Foley suggests, the woman's saffron-coloured *peplos* which he wears in *Frogs* (46).[53] For the spectators, description of the costume is not so necessary since it is rather more visible in the acting-area than the mask; even so, Euripides' emphasis on the features of both the mask and the wig of Dionysos is particularly noticeable.[54]

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antistrophe in the First Stasimon to the sufferings of the Trojans and the Akhaians for a prize that is an εἴδωλον (1136) and, in the text of her edition, a νεφέλαν (1135), the same term that the Therapon uses at 707. Further, she does not mention that the phantom is before the eyes of the spectators in the character of Helen from its introduction in the Prologue to the end of the play even after its formal disappearance (605).

52 Such dissolution was a real possibility. After Athens' defeat, Thebes and Corinth in particular voted for the enslavement of the city and for the destruction of Attika (τὴν πόλιν ἡμῶν ἀνδραποδίζεσθαι καὶ τὴν χώραν ἐρημοῦν, And. 3.21. Cf. D. 19.65–6, Plou. *Lys.* 15.2–3).

53 Foley (1980) 130 n. 38. Cf. Dingel (1971) 351 and n. 73.

54 The emphasis on mask and wig here is a reminder that the tragic mask covers the whole head (see Marshall [1999] 188). This metonymy between mask and head is particularly important when later we envisage the decapitated head/mask of Pentheus. See Wiles (2007) 57–8 for connections between the military helmet and the theatrical mask.

Dionysos' face is flushed with wine (236, 438), and his skin is fair from keeping out of the sun (457–9). The visual effect may have been reminiscent of the practice described by Xenophon of women whitening their faces and rouging their cheeks.[55] Dingel describes masks portraying women as white-faced and long-haired, and men, as tanned and short-haired.[56] Dodds notes that the sunburnt face was "a mark of manliness".[57] Dionysos' hair precludes him from the manly art of boxing; it is long, "flowing beside [his] cheek" (455–6), "fragrant with fair locks" (235).[58] The descriptions of the disguised Dionysos arise from what Pentheus hears and sees, but that is no reason to doubt that these are verbal representations of what the spectators can actually see and are intended to emphasise the gender-crossing that is part of the Dionysiac disguise and anticipates that of Pentheus. Although the mask may represent gender-reversal to the spectators its feminine characteristics may not seem surprising; it could appear as a generic 'young woman' mask.[59]

What sets this mask apart among tragic masks is the smiling face. As Foley says, "We can safely presume that most masks in tragedy were not smiling".[60] Dodds concludes that "the actor who played the

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[55] X. *Oik.* 10.2.

[56] Dingel (1971) 347. Marshall (1999) 191 identifies six types of mask used in the fifth century of which the three male are dark and the three female are pale. Wiles (2007) 54 compares fourth century masks which "prove incompatible with [Marshall's] theory" and Marshall himself notes that "direct evidence [for tragic masks] is slight" (188). Green (1994) 77–8 also comments on the lack of evidence for masks of this period. The character-types which Green identifies in the masks from the Middle Comedy of the first quarter of the fourth century, however, overlap in five categories with the types proposed by Marshall. Green includes old men and old women, young men and young women and wives (equivalent to Marshall's mature women). The character-types peculiar to comedy are slaves and Herakles (70–75).

[57] Dodds (1960) note at line 458.

[58] The description of the mask and hair of Dionysos is reminiscent of the colouring of terracotta masks of Dionysos from Boiotian graves mentioned in the footnotes above in this chapter, προεωρακώς, and discussed in Wrede (1928) 66–95 at 90. The red face ("rotes Gesicht") and yellow hair ("gelbes Haupt") of the masks recall the face of Dionysos (in the *Bakkhai*) flushed with wine, as well as his fair hair. In similar masks from Thebes the hair style emphasises "the feminine traits of the god" ("die weiblichen Züge des Gottes"). See Plate III.i.

[59] Dingel (1971) 347: "Jüngere meist *blondes*", and n. 4. Contrast Marshall (1999) 191 who typifies the generic 'young woman' mask as having a "pale face", "*dark hair*", and a "youthful hairstyle". My italics.

[60] Foley (1980) 127. Taplin (1996) 189 makes the point that nor were comic masks characterised by "merriment" but by "*ugliness*" Cf. Aristotle's comments on the comic mask at *Poetics* 1449a34–7: τὸ γὰρ γελοῖόν ἐστιν ἁμάρτημά τι καὶ αἶσχος ἀνώδυνον καὶ οὐ φθαρτικόν, οἷον εὐθὺς τὸ γελοῖον πρόσωπον αἰσχρόν τι καὶ διεστραμμένον ἄνευ ὀδύνης ("What we mean by 'the ridiculous' is some error or ugliness that is painless

Stranger no doubt wore a smiling mask throughout".[61] This interpretation, which would place a smiling mask also on the excessively punishing god (1346) at the end of the play, is consistent with references within the play to the Dionysiac smile. The first of these is by the Khoros describing not the Stranger but the god (γελάσαι, 380). The second reference is by the Attendant/Guard commenting on his amenable prisoner (γελῶν, 439); and the third is again by the Khoros in reference to the god (προσώπῳ γελῶντι, 1021) at the end of the vengeful Fourth Stasimon which anticipates the Second Messenger's account of Pentheus' death.[62] The smiling beast (θὴρ, 436) which was Pentheus' prey becomes Bakkhos, the predator-beast, ensnaring the hunter (1020–1). The reference to προσώπῳ is suggestive of the mask itself, even as at the moment of Agave's recognition of Pentheus the poet draws attention to the mask (πρόσωπον, 1277) she holds in her arms.[63] The smiling face of Dionysos is, then, perhaps the most remarkable feature of the Stranger/god's appearance, the feature that first claims the spectators' attention with Dionysos' announcement of his presence, Ἥκω (1) "I have come".

Not only is this smiling mask anomalous in tragedy, and a particular mask among generic character-type masks, but it seems to invite a different interaction between character and spectator from other "special masks".[64] Pentheus, commenting not on the basis of his own distorted observations but from what he has heard from others, describes the mask as ὄσσοις χάριτας Ἀφροδίτης ἔχων (236) "having

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and has no harmful effects. The example that comes immediately to mind is the comic mask, which is ugly and distorted but causes no pain").

[61] Dodds (1960) note at line 439. Cf. Dingel (1971) 351: "Die Maske wird für Gott und Zauberer gleich gewesen sein". For further discussion see Henrichs (1993) 38 n. 67. Wiles (2007) 221–2 calls Dodds and Foley's smiling mask a "chimera" on the grounds that it is described as "laughing rather than smiling" (221). Wiles also finds an incompatibility between Dionysos having flushed cheeks and white skin and considers that this indicates that "there is no stability in the god's features" (222). These are not distinctions that persuade me.

[62] Cf. Steiner (2001) 171.

[63] This scene is an inversion of that in which Sophokles' Elektra laments over the urn. Whereas Elektra's lament turns to joy when she realises that she does not hold the ashes of her brother, Agave's triumph turns to grief when she recognises her son's face and discovers that he has died at her own hands. On the interchangeability of head and mask in this Euripidean scene, see Davidson (1991) 91–2. Cf. Rehm (1992) 40.

[64] "Special masks," according to Marshall, (1999) 194, "could be produced for special effects". Examples include the mask of the blinded Oidipous (S. *OT*) or that of Helen with her scratched cheeks (E. *Hel.*). Cf. Dingel (1971) 350–1. Contrast Wiles (2007) 221–31, and above in Introduction, section II, *Generic images.*

the charms of Aphrodite in its eyes".[65] The eyes of the Dionysos mask suggest elusiveness and seduction. This is not a mask which, like the conventional dramatic mask, invites you to see yourself,[66] or presents character,[67] but the Dionysos mask is nearer to Jean-Pierre Vernant's description:

> It is a mask whose strange stare exerts a fascination, but it is hollow, empty, indicating the absence of a god who is somewhere else but who tears one out of oneself, making one lose one's bearings in one's everyday, familiar life, and who takes possession of one just as if this empty mask was now pressed to one's face, covering and transforming it.[68]

"Tension between presence and absence", Frontisi-Ducroux suggests, is an aspect of the worship of cult masks of Dionysos.[69] The mask visually symbolises the presence of the god, yet "Dionysos remains far off, distant in the presence of his effigy".[70]

In the drama, the tension for the spectators may be even greater, because the god is saying that he is present at the same time as saying that visually he is not. Euripides inverts the worship expectations of his spectators just as he inverts their dramatic expectations in the mask as a presenter of character. He "forces attention behind the surface show",[71] but onto a god who is unfathomable. Only at the end of the play when the visual and the verbal are obviously at odds, and the action of the play, culminating in the image of the head of Pentheus, has done its disillusioning work, does the smiling mask begin to function as a 'normal' mask. Then the smile makes its character plain, it 'confronts' the spectator,[72] and may challenge him to see himself, not from identifying with the character of the god—whose immortal ease

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[65] Homer calls the charms of Aphrodite θελκτήρια ("beguilements") and lists them as φιλότης ("loveliness"), ἵμερος ("passion of sex") and ὀαριστὺς πάρφασις ("whispered endearment"), this last coming with a warning, ἥ τ' ἔκλεψε νόον πύκα περ φρονεόντων ("that steals the heart away even from the thoughtful", *Il.* 14.215–7). Translation by Lattimore (1961).

[66] Marshall, (1999) 189.

[67] See Foley (1980) 128–9, Jones (1962) 45–6, and Webster (1965) 5–13. Cf. Rehm (1992) 41, and Marshall (1999) 189.

[68] Vernant (1988b) 396. Cf. Wrede (1928) 77 on the singular gaze of Dionysos: "Die beiden grossen Augen auf den Beschauer richtet". See Wiles (2007) 223–5 on Vernant.

[69] Frontisi-Ducroux (1989) 151–65 at 152.

[70] Frontisi-Ducroux (1989) 152.

[71] Jones (1962) 260.

[72] See Rehm (1992) 40 on this effect on the spectator of the tragic mask in general.

protects him from the consequences of his own hubris—but from the ambiguity of having colluded with the god and of ultimately pitying the god's human victims.

The smiling mask, then, can invite the spectators to think outside their familiar *reproductive* patterns of ameliorating destructive elements of absolute power/hubris by the seduction of its rewards,[73] to 'see' *productively* the ambiguity of such power, its illusions and delusions.[74] The smiling mask is an arresting image which, as a central prop, can perform the 'critical role' of the radical vehicle of an extended image metaphor.[75] It can also cue the pairs of paradoxical abstractions which form part of the conceptual links between image and image. To examine this role in more detail I turn first to the image mapping between the smiling mask and the masked god of cult and their ambiguous conceptual links in worship and retribution which are presented to the spectators in the Prologue.

The masked god of cult: worship and retribution (Plate III.i)

Dionysos steps into the acting-area at the opening of the *Bakkhai* as gods so often do to introduce the action in Euripidean plays. Where he differs from other god-characters is that he is not going to depart from the dramatic action. He is in the acting-area as god (by virtue of his divine father, Zeus) and as mortal (the child of Semele), and this mixture is instantiated by his preliminary announcement that he is here (πάρειμι, 5) as god in mortal form (μορφὴν δ' ἀμείψας ἐκ θεοῦ βροτησίαν, 4. Cf. 53–4). An economical way for the spectators to assimilate this information visually is through their superimposition of the theatre mask onto the cult mask, so that they simultaneously 'see'

[73] An example today of such amelioration is found in the euphemisms of war, e.g. "collateral damage", "pre-emptive strike", "damage limitation". Andokides (3.37–9), undeterred by destructive elements of Athens' former hegemony and their possible contribution to her defeat, also advocated a *reproduction* of those elements—persuasion (πείσαντες), concealment (λαθόντες), bribes (πριάμενοι), and force (βιασάμενοι)—in order to create a new Athenian empire.

[74] For *reproductive* and *productive* thinking and their relation to image and word see Figure 1 and discussion above in Introduction, section III, *Image and word*.

[75] See Verbrugge and McCarrell (1977) 510 and above in Introduction section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Comprehension of metaphor.

the god and the man.[76] In the Prologue, however, as at the end of the play, it is the god's voice that dominates the visual 'man'.

The relation of the god to the spectators is another way in which Dionysos differs from other god-characters whom Euripides uses in his Prologues. Dionysos makes a pact with the spectators, letting them in on the trick of disguise that he is going to play on the characters and Khoros by becoming an apparently mortal player in the drama. By including the spectators in his secret the god is making them his allies. At the same time the spectators may feel uneasy about an alliance which is exclusive of the mortals whose tragedy could be expected to arouse their pity and fear. The Prologue plays on this tension between attraction and reservation, and explores and develops polarities already implicit in the worship of Dionysos. It does this in part by appropriating to abstract worship concrete images suggestive of the elements of sacrifice: the masked god as priest,[77] the tomb as altar, the *thiasos* as ritual company and Pentheus the victim. In the last 600 lines of the play, as Seidensticker has shown, "the pattern of sacrificial ritual" is clearly analogous to events in the play.[78] Up to the dressing scene (which corresponds with the adornment of the sacrificial victim) the series of same-shape images discussed below provides an implicit and simplified cue to sacrificial allusions and their distortions. The final image in this series, the mask/head of Pentheus, completes the series as a cue to the sacrificial victim. To return to the Prologue, although the elements of worship are familiar to the spectators, the ambiguities in their representation can be surprising and disturbing. As the dominant visual item in Dionysos' long opening speech, the mask, already redolent of religious and theatrical ambiguity for the spectators, can act as a visual cue to ambiguity in Dionysiac worship. Below I discuss these

[76] Foley (1980) 128 envisages the costume including the mask as conveying the divinity of Dionysos to the spectators but not to the characters in the play. Dingel (1971) 351 imagines Dionysos clothed as an oriental magician and probably carrying an ordinary *thyrsos*, rather than the golden wand of the god. The fact that not even his Asian *thiasos* recognise the god in his exotic mortal manifestation emphasises the success of the disguise. But the repeated information at memorable points in the Prologue, the beginning and the end, that Dionysos has changed (ἀμείψας, 4; ἀλλάξας, 53; μετέβαλον, 54) from his divine form, keeps his dual identity before the spectators' minds.

[77] The Stranger later escorts Pentheus to his sacrifice (1047) where the priest role is taken over by his mother (1114). Cf. Seaford (1996a) note on line 1047.

[78] Seidensticker (1979) 181–90 at 181.

four elements of worship—priest, altar, ritual company and victim—in the context of the retribution through which Dionysos presents them.

Priest and altar

In introducing himself in the drama Dionysos establishes two focal points, himself and his mother's tomb. First, himself. He is Διὸς παῖς ("son of Zeus"), a title which stands in apposition to and is suggestive of an etymological connection with his own name, Διόνυσος (1–2).[79] He goes on to juxtapose this Zeus-derived name with the name of his mortal mother and her distinguished though mortal father. Dionysos' mixed parentage is indicative of the 'mixing' that characterises him in the play. His cult has been successful in Asia (21–2) where Greek and foreigner mix together (μιγάσιν…ὁμοῦ, 18). Though he is Theban-born himself and Thebes is the Greek city he has singled out first for conversion, he comes not only in the disguise of a mortal but as a foreigner. He looks effeminate (235–6; cf. 353) and he mixes with the young women (συγγίγνεται/…νεάνισιν, 237–8; cf. 353–4). He is a creature who crosses the boundaries of human and divine, of race, and of gender. Although for the reader of the play this information is delayed and we receive the picture, as Pentheus does, initially through hearsay (κλύω, 216) and rumour (λέγουσι, 233), and then through what he sees (453–9), for the original fifth-century BC spectator, Dionysos' capacity for mixing the message is apparent from the start.

The second focal point which Dionysos directs the spectators to see (ὁρῶ, 6) is the tomb of Semele. Dodds comments that in Thebes of the late fifth century Semele's σηκός (burial place) and her μνῆμα (memorial) were at separate locations, whereas in the play the locations coincide (596–9).[80] In the Theatre of Dionysos, Semele's smoking sacred (ἄβατον, 10) precinct, which is near the house (τόδ' ἐγγὺς οἴκων, 7), could be represented by a *thymele* in the acting-area. Such an hypothesis is attractive for the superimposing, which the *thymele* may afford, of the loci of Dionysiac ritual and significant loci in the *Bakkhai* itself.

What, then, do we know of the existence of a *thymele*, its possible position in the acting-area, and what it was like? Although there is no archaeological evidence for a *thymele* in the Theatre of Dionysos, its

[79] See Dodds (1960) ad loc.
[80] Dodds (1960) note at lines 6–12.

presence appears to be consistent with the ritual context of the festival of the City Dionysia.[81] Understood as a "hearth",[82] the *thymele* in the orchestra offers a continuation of earlier settings for dramatic performances which Sourvinou-Inwood argues were "by the *hestia* in the prytaneion, then by the *eschara* in the Agora".[83] Seaford comments that "at the City Dionysia the male *thiasos* continued, even after its celebrations had become drama, to dance around a sacrificial altar (θυμέλη)".[84] Given that he considers that the male *thiasos* develops into the tragic Khoros,[85] his comments suggest that not only was there a *thymele* in the acting-area but that it was in the centre so that the Khoros could "dance around" it.[86] This raises our second issue of the position of the *thymele*. Wiles and Burkert also argue for a *thymele* at the centre of the orchestra.[87] Sourvinou-Inwood, on the other hand, notes that altars in the orchestras of early theatres at Thorikos (fifth century BC) and Isthmia (early fourth century BC) were off-centre; further, the "vaguely rectangular" shaped orchestras of these early theatres, which probably reflected that of the Theatre of Dionysos,[88] were "not shaped by the needs of performances involving circular dancing around an altar".[89]

Two terms have been used for *thymele*—altar and hearth—an ambiguity which raises our third question as to what the *thymele* was like. Sourvinou-Inwood notes of her own argument and that of Gow and Wiles, that although all three approach the question from different directions, all associate the *thymele* with the hearth.[90] Sourvinou-Inwood speculates on a hearth altar, which implies a low altar with a hollowed out centre.[91] Wiles suggests "more a hearth rooted in the earth",[92] and Gow, by attaching the meaning of *thymele* through the verb θύειν to

[81] Sourvinou-Inwood (2003) 142–5.
[82] For arguments in favour of this meaning see Gow (1912) 213–38.
[83] Sourvinou-Inwood (2003) 144.
[84] Seaford (1994) 281.
[85] Seaford (1996b) 288.
[86] In contrast, and writing of the earlier performances at the Agora, Sourvinou-Inwood (1994) 283, 287, positions the dances of the Khoros "*at* the altar of the twelve gods" [my italics]. On dance "around" an altar see also Csapo (2003) 69–98.
[87] Burkert (1966) 101–2, and n. 32 for bibliography. Wiles (1997) 70–2 although at 71–2 he notes that archaeological evidence for *thymelai* in the centre of the orchestra is confined to three theatres: Epidauros, Aigai, and Dodone.
[88] Sourvinou-Inwood (1994) 276. Cf. Moretti (1999–2000) 377–8.
[89] Sourvinou-Inwood (1994) 277.
[90] Sourvinou-Inwood (2003) 186 n. 27.
[91] Sourvinou-Inwood (2003) 143–4. Cf. Pickard-Cambridge (1968) 60.
[92] Wiles (1997) 176.

an original meaning of "burning", which then developed into the "ritual burning" denoted by its Homeric meaning of "sacrifice", understands *thymele* to signify "simply the place of fire".[93] Imagining a raised object, Burkert cites Pollux (4.123)—εἴτε βῆμά τι εἰτε βωμός—and proposes "a kind of platform or flat table" which could act as an altar in a play.[94] Rehm, on the other hand, disagrees that there was any fixture such as a *thymele*, although he does consider the centre of the acting-area the strongest position and so suitable for temporary altar props.[95]

There seem to be two spatial frames at work in these visualisations. An altar fronts its spectators,[96] a hearth invites encirclement; tragic drama is performed for and before the god whose statue oversees the dramatic competition, but the Khoros, regardless of the shape of the orchestra, may be arranged symmetrically around or beside a central point.[97] Thus the acting space may afford simultaneously both a forward projection for the actors and a symmetrical projection for the Khoros. In the theatre where there was no blood sacrifice, a sacred centre, however it was designated, could draw together into the same spatial frame the minor rituals performed in the theatre as part of the Dionysiac festival as well as the dramatic and choral performance. Of the rituals, Pickard-Cambridge mentions the purification of the theatre with a sucking pig by περιστίαρχοι or περιεστίαρχοι ("those who go around the hearth"), and the pouring of libations by the *strategoi*.[98] If there is no *thymele*, the centre can retain this importance as a remembered sacred space; on the other hand, a visual fixture adds emphasis and is a practical site for the minor rituals. When we come to the *Bakkhai* in particular, an active hearth at the centre, a "place of fire", can assimilate allusions to the cult of Dionysos Eleuthereus (the god's only cult that connects him with the hearth),[99] and to earlier performances in the Prytaneion and the Agora, as well as the fire scenes in the play—the tomb of Semele and the destruction of the palace. Nor, if

[93] Gow (1912) 216.
[94] Burkert (1966) 101–2.
[95] Rehm (2002) 41 and 309 n. 134. Contrast Wiles (1997) 70.
[96] See Rehm (2002) 41.
[97] The embedded stone tangents to the circle of stone in the surface of the orchestra in the theatre at Argos are suggestive of such a symmetry, which, like a circle, is made with reference to a central point or line (see Moretti [1993] Figures 9 and 10, and page 39).
[98] Pickard-Cambridge (1968) 67. Cf. Wiles (1997) 72.
[99] See Gow (1912) 237.

this site were a hearth at ground level or even a low hearth altar, rather than a raised altar, would it obstruct sight lines. Although evidence for the existence, position and form of a *thymele* in the orchestra of the Theatre of Dionysos is inconclusive, the appropriateness in the *Bakkhai* of the hearth at the centre is worth exploring.

A *thymele* at the centre of the orchestra, representative of a sacred space (ἄβατον…πέδον τόδε, 10), would place the actor playing Dionysos on the north-south line which takes in the Akropolis, the priest of Dionysos, the statue of the god presiding over the festival, and, through the central doors of the *skene* and behind it, the altar of Dionysos. Figure 6 below modifies Wiles' diagram of this north-south axis.[100]

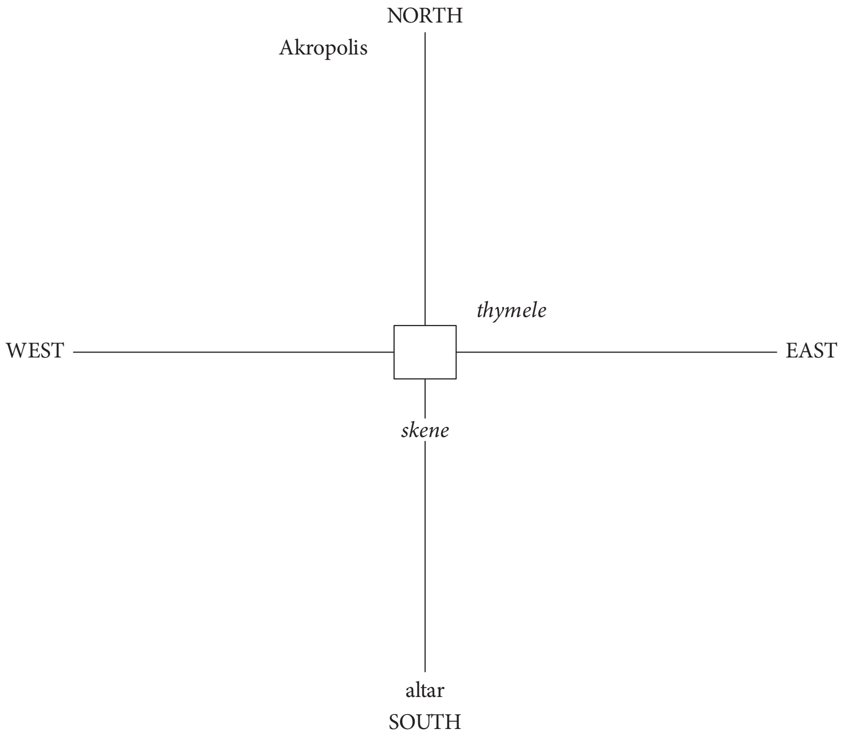

Fig. 6 Axes of the performance space

[100] See Wiles (1997) 57 Figure 9.

On the horizontal axis, Dionysos of the Prologue would provide a direct spatial link between the divine Dionysos, represented by the cult statue, and the sacrificial altar; between the god and his victim. In the Prologue where the voice of the god and remembered cult images are likely to be most active in the minds of the spectators, the Dionysos character can also create a reverse impression of overseeing the spectators, as the statue oversees the performance.

On a vertical axis, Wiles suggests that the *thymele* emphasises the plane of the orchestra as mid-point between Olympos and Hades. This is the plane at which mortals work out their destinies.[101] By locating the smiling mask of Dionysos at the *thymele* the poet can indicate visually and spatially the two-fold potential of the smile, its up-side and its down-side. In the simulation for mortals of the ease of the gods which comes with Bakkhic worship—the music, the dancing, the camaraderie of the feast, and above all the wine which frees mortals from their cares (278–85; 377–85; 772–4)—Dionysos raises mortals above their struggles on earth. But in the smile which can drive those who fail to believe in the god to death, to exile and to metamorphosis[102] (as we see in the fates that befall Pentheus, Agave and Kadmos at the end of the play) lies the "excessively punishing" god. This double dimension of the god is familiar to the spectators through the myth behind the festival, a myth which tells of Athenians' own resistance to the god who then punishes them with an incurable penile disease.[103] In honour of the god and as a reminder of this punishment, Athenians carried *phalloi* in the procession which preceded the dithyrambic and dramatic contests in the City Dionysia.[104]

Within the play the *thymele* may assimilate a fictive function as the precinct of Semele "smouldering with the still living flame of Zeus' fire" (τυφόμενα Δίου πυρὸς ἔτι ζῶσαν φλόγα, 8) and a factual function as the hearth over which the mixed libations of wine and water have been poured in honour of Dionysos. For the Athenian spectators

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[101] Wiles (1997) 76.

[102] In the *Homeric Hymn to Dionysos* those who oppose Dionysos or fail to recognise him similarly are punished with death or metamorphosis (7.50–3). In the *Hymn*, unlike in the *Bakkhai*, there is one (κυβερνήτης) who recognises the god in mortal form and is rewarded with happiness (7.15–23; 53–5).

[103] For the myth see Sourvinou-Inwood (1994) 270 and particularly n. 6 with references.

[104] See Sourvinou-Inwood (2003) 71. Cf . Dikaiopolis and his celebration of the rural Dionysia in Aristophanes' *Akharnes* 241–62.

the fictive function can build on what may already be symbolized by an actual *thymele* and its offerings: Dionysos is central, and his location at the mid-point allows, as with the wine and water, a mingling and a crossing over.[105] As the god of wine, he is, as Teiresias says, also the libation (284). Csapo takes Teiresias' idea further, relating wine to blood, the "stain" of the bloodless offering on the altar reminiscent of the stain of the blood sacrifice.[106] The grape vines with which Dionysos garlands his mother's σηκός (burial place) are appropriate to a *thymele* as a hearth connected with the festival of the god, and are reminiscent of vine decoration of Dionysiac scenes, including scenes of worship, in vase painting. As Dodds notes, "The vine marks the spot as a Dionysiac holy place".[107] Thus the opening scene of the god/man beside the tomb/hearth may have parallels with the familar rituals of priest and altar, rituals associated with the blood sacrifice at the sanctuary altar below the theatre which have preceded the dramatic contests. At this stage, although the spectators' own resistance myth has been remembered in the procession of the festival, and they can anticipate the tragic outcome of the Theban myth, the benign face of the god may project that all will be well, that retribution will resolve itself, as it has for Athens, in worship and festival, that they themselves, in their pact with the god, can mix immortal with mortal.

Ritual company and victim

If, as I have proposed above, the visible presentation of the opening of the play maps onto Athenians' own worship practice in cult (through the masked god) and festival (through the sacrificial allusions of priest and altar), then the further focal points of Dionysos' speech—the Theban *thiasos* and Pentheus—may resonate for the spectators with their ritual counterparts in the sacrificial company and the victim. At the same time, just as Dionysos is ambiguous as god and mortal, there is already in the Prologue ambiguity about the ritual company and the victim. The ritual company includes two distinct *thiasoi*—the Asian

[105] See Wiles (1997) 76 for this symbolism of the *thymele* and the libations.

[106] Csapo (1997) 258.

[107] Dodds (1960) note at line 11, and see also his reference to the ivy which features in another version of the birth of Dionysos at Euripides' *Phoinissai* 651. Ivy and the vine are Dionysiac plants. Sourvinou-Inwood (1994) 285 refers to "ritual schema" in which, as part of a god's festival, guests dine in the relevant god's sanctuary while they lie on beds of leaves from the god's plant and wear wreaths made from it.

and the Theban—and the victim Pentheus is introduced as the familial and political double of Dionysos,[108] both the surviving grandsons of Kadmos, both claimants to absolute rule in Thebes—Pentheus as king (43) Dionysos as god (47).[109]

Ambiguity in the *thiasos*/ritual company is registered by Dionysos' glide from a scenario in Asia where he is visible in his dance and his rites (21–2) to a scene in Thebes where he is disguised and his rites delude his followers (παράκοποι φρενῶν, 33) and are coercive (ᾤστρησ'.../μανίαις, 32–3; ἠνάγκασ', 34). The pattern which he established as he moved west obscures his real intent in Thebes. The women of Thebes have the outward appearance and the mental obsession that mark them as Mainads, and yet unbeknown to themselves they are being punished.[110]

Dionysos' two *thiasoi* reflect his ambiguous power manifested in the dance and in his coercion (cf. 39), in his visibility and invisibility. Whereas the human form of Dionysos in his smiling mask and the dancing Asian troupe of the play's Khoros are visible to the spectators, the god behind the mask and the Theban women are invisible, the one present but hidden behind his disguise, the other existing only in the imaginations of the spectators. The invisibility of the god and the Theban *thiasos* throughout the play and the scope this leaves for illusion, heightens the disillusionment and harsh reality at the end of the play with the appearance of Agave and then the punishing god.

Although the difference between the two *thiasoi* is made increasingly explicit with the progress of the plot, the seeds of those differences are planted in the Prologue. The dance associated with the Asian Khoros is exemplified in each Stasimon, their dance reaching its climax in their apparent mime of Pentheus' death as it is occurring on the mountain

[108] Family connections feature repeatedly in the Prologue, e.g., at 2, 11, 26, 37, 41, 44.

[109] Kadmos himself emphasises his lack of a direct male heir: ὅστις ἄτεκνος ἀρσένων παίδων γεγὼς (1305). The other contender would have been Aktaion, the son of Autonoe (230) whose fate in challenging the goddess Artemis, Kadmos fears, may foreshadow Pentheus' fate in his refusal to honour Dionysos (337–41). Kadmos also links the name of Aktaion (1227) with the frenzy (οἰστροπλῆγας, 1229) of his mother and her sister Ino when he goes to the mountain to collect the remains of Pentheus. To Agave, Kadmos identifies the location of her son's death by the place where Aktaion was torn to pieces by Artemis' hunting hounds (1291), the manner of his death providing a further clue to Agave in her progression to a full understanding of her violent part in bringing about the retribution of Dionysos (1296).

[110] On the difference between the Theban and the Asian Mainads see Vernant (1988b) 404–9.

(Fourth Stasimon, 977–1023), and in their celebratory dance reminiscent of the *komos* of the festival (Fifth Stasimon, 1153–64). The Theban Mainads, on the other hand, represented by Agave, celebrate an empty triumph which harks back to the god's coercion and their expulsion from their homes (32) in the Prologue (cf. 118–9). Thus Agave presents herself to Kadmos: ἥ τὰς παρ' ἱστοῖς ἐκλιποῦσα κερκίδας/ἐς μείζον' ἥκω, θῆρας ἀγρεύειν χεροῖν (1236–7) "I have abandoned the shuttle by the loom and come to greater things, to hunting animals with my hands".[111]

Similarly, Pentheus as victim is ambiguous. The god singles him out for his opposition to him (45–6). Yet the god has made himself the visual counterpart of Pentheus by his mortal form as a young man; and the doubling between the two, to which Teiresias draws attention when he compares the honours both could enjoy (319–21), is brought to its climax in the dressing scene.

Although the ambiguity of the god's worship and retribution is implicit in the Prologue and cued by the smiling mask on the god disguised as a mortal, the benignity of the mask, the spectators' privileged relation with the god, and the familiarity of their cult and sacrificial allusions may encourage the spectators to indulge this ambiguity. Establishing the sympathies of the spectators with the god from the outset is crucial to maximising the effect of the ambiguous position they find themselves in at the end when they realise that they have colluded in the death of one like themselves (τὸν ὅμοιον). It is in the Athenian spectators' identification with both victor and victim that Euripides can simulate the ambiguity of Athens' own absolute power at a time, late in the war, when that power is under threat. For the present, however, a mapping from the visible, smiling theatrical mask onto the remembered cult mask with its acceptable paradoxes of worship and retribution helps to legitimise the ambiguity of the smiling mask and to ensure the spectators' collaboration. Besides, retribution belongs in past myth, whereas the spectators are soon to be distracted by the joys associated with the god's worship present in the dancing and singing in the Parodos, followed by the vignette with Kadmos and Teiresias. The smiling mask is not visible—Dionysos has gone to Kithairon (62–3)—and in its place a new prop is introduced which

[111] Agave's announcement of her arrival (ἥκω) as a woman in the form of a hunter is a grim parody of the arrival of the God in the form of a human.

makes an image mapping with the smiling mask and the cult mask on a pillar. This is the symbol of the god's power, the garlanded *thyrsos*.

The thyrsos: *dance and violence* *(Plate III.ii)*

To some extent the *thyrsos* and its ambiguities are visually anticipated by the garlanding of Semele's tomb. The vine that is associated with Dionysiac forgetfulness of suffering has instead been used to crown a memorial to past wrongs for which Dionysos is seeking retribution. The *thyrsos*, similarly, has beneficial and destructive effects. It is a wand shaken up and down in the ecstasy of Bakkhic dance (ἀνὰ…τινάσσων, 80; cf. 553–4) and a miraculous source of water, wine and honey (704–7, 710–1); but it is also, as the spectators know from the Prologue, a weapon (κίσσινον βέλος, 25; cf. 113, 762–3, 1099–1100). Thus the garlanding of the tomb/hearth may signify an assertion of the power of Dionysos (a sign which is a constant in the acting-area), just as the *thyrsoi* of the Theban Mainads need to be "regarlanded" to renew their force (1054–5).[112]

When the Khoros of Asian Bakkhai enter in the Parodos, they come at Dionysos' command, beating their drums around the royal palace (τύπανα…/βασίλειά τ' ἀμφὶ δώματ' ἐλθοῦσαι τάδε/κτυπεῖτε Πενθέως, 59–61). They too may be wielding *thyrsoi* and be crowned with ivy (80–1).[113] If the tomb of Semele is in the place of a central hearth then the Khoros' dance may be "around" (ἀμφὶ) this point, thereby creating an illusion, in addition to the palace/*skene* convention, of the palace also at the centre, an illusion which can serve the palace's subsequent destruction, and an illusion which spatially matches Pentheus' secular power with the power of the god symbolised by the vine-wreathed tomb. The spectators may themselves be being initiated into seeing double.

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[112] See Foley (1980) 124, and on the transformation of a fennel stalk into a *thyrsos* by the addition of ivy, see Dodds (1960) note at line 113. Cf. Kalke (1985) 412–3, 416 on the significance of these lines to "the three-fold parallels between Pentheus, the thyrsus and the god" (413).

[113] Of the probability that the Khoros are accompanied by some of the Dionysiac accoutrements of which they sing, see Seaford (1996a) note at lines 64–169. Cf. Dingel (1971) 351 and n. 76.

The Khoros of Asian Bakkhai emulate the ecstasy of their devotion with their singing and dancing. Their service is done with swiftness and ease (65–7) and their mood is marked by holiness and joy (73–82). They have the zeal of missionaries, but they are on a novel mission, bringing worship from the uncivilised east and the mountains into the heart of the civilised west, the streets of Thebes (83–7). In the first antistrophe they complement Dionysos' story of his human birth with its divine correlative and remind the spectators that the god has a bestial form (88–103).[114] They go on to instruct the people of Thebes how to dress for their worship of Dionysos and exhort them to become followers (105–16). The epode recaptures the lithe movements, the sweetness, ecstasy and holiness of the *prooimion* and the first strophe, albeit with brief images of the violence of the hunt and the eating of raw flesh (138–9) which are reminders of a darker side behind the smiling mask, and prefigure the reports by both Messengers, firstly of the Theban Mainads and their tearing apart of the grazing animals (739), and then of Pentheus himself (1127, 1135). The Khoros' mention of the *thyrsoi* as νάρθηκας ὑβριστὰς (113) "violent wands" similarly hints at ambiguity in this joyful cult.[115] With excited rhythms the Khoros urge on the followers of Bromios.[116]

In answer to the Khoros' invitation Thebes produces old, blind Teiresias and aged Kadmos (175). Their presence, echoing the arrival of Dionysos in the Prologue (ἥκω, 174, 180), and their costume, old men in the trappings of Bakkhai (176–7, 180), make a ludicrous picture.[117] The *thyrsoi* which they tie up (176),[118] and which they use to beat out the rhythm of the dance (188, 251) must also double, for the spectators, as sticks for their old age, and in Teiresias' case, his blindness.[119] The 'dance' of the old men makes an absurd contrast with the swift and effortless movements of the god of the epode and his female worshipper. Pentheus' ridicule could well be directing the evaluation of the spectators when he calls the sight of the

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[114] Cf. Foley (1980) 133 at n. 43, and Boardman (1975) 35 and illustration 44, Beazley no. 200171.
[115] Cf. Kalke (1985) 424.
[116] Dodds (1960) 73.
[117] Dodds (1960) 89–91 note on lines 170–369 wants only muted humour in this scene, but its visual incongruities and the laughter they may generate, seem consistent with the ambiguity of the god, and heighten the anxiety Dionysos produces when mirth turns to misery. Cf. Seidensticker (1978) 310–6.
[118] Cf. Kalke (1985) 411.
[119] See Seidensticker (1978) 313.

two, τόδ'...θαῦμα (248) "this...marvel", and Kadmos, πολὺν γέλων (250) "a great joke".[120] Ironically he is also anticipating later scenes when the First Messenger will call upon him in all sincerity to imagine the θαῦμα "marvel" (cf. 693) which is represented by the Theban Mainads, and when he himself, as one of a youthful pair, will be an object of ridicule (γέλωτα, 854).

In these later scenes, the one imagined, the other visually represented, the *thyrsos* is again a prominent feature. In the First Messenger's report the *thyrsos* is used to produce the nourishment of water (704), wine (706), and honey (711); it is wielded in Bakkhic revel (724), and is finally a weapon (733, 762) more potent than men's spears (761–3, cf. 798–9). As part of his Dionysiac livery the *thyrsos* is associated first with Pentheus' equivocation (835–6) and then with his utter submission to the power of the god (941–4). As Pentheus tries to synchronise the beat of his *thyrsos* to the movement of his feet, the scene recalls the old men's 'dancing' steps (184–90).[121] Although both attempts at dancing can be moments of slapstick, in the Pentheus scene laughter may obscure the fact that the *thyrsos* here symbolises the god's absolute power over Pentheus, a power slyly acknowledged by Dionysos: αἰνῶ δ' ὅτι μεθέστηκας φρενῶν (944) "I commend you that you have changed your mind".[122] To return to the Kadmos-Teiresias scene, even there, where the *thyrsos* may be the focus of harmless laughter, once Pentheus arrives the *thyrsos* also excites his violence. His threat against the absent Dionysos (παύσω κτυποῦντα θύρσον, 240, "I will stop him from making his thyrsos ring") is put most immediately into practice against his grandfather (οὐκ ἐλευθέραν / θύρσου μεθήσεις χεῖρ', 253–4, "Let go your grip of the thyrsos"). The scene is both a caricature of what the Khoros have enacted and a rehearsal for the initiation of Pentheus[123]

[120] See Seidensticker (1978) 314–5 where he comments on the poet's direction of a comic response. Against such direction, see Gregory (1999–2000) 66–7. I agree with Gregory that Pentheus himself may be laughing with contempt (cf. διαγελᾷς, 272, 322), but given the visual humour of the scene, the spectators can both understand the connotations of Pentheus' response and also understand the response as the poet's verbalising of their own visual experience. Cf. Taplin (1996) 191, and, in response to Taplin, Gredley (1996) 206–8.

[121] Compare also Kadmos' toss of his grey hair (185; cf. 150) and Pentheus' Bakkhic shaking of his head (930–1), and, in general, the mapping between the two old men, dressed for their departure to the mountains as women and Mainads, onto the two young men (Dionysos and Pentheus in the dressing scene).

[122] See Muecke (1982) 33 on the "grotesque" humour of this scene.

[123] On the relation of the Pentheus dressing scene to initiatory rites see Seaford (1981) 258–9, (1994) 284–301, (1996a) notes at lines 912–76.

and the escalating horror of the image of the *thyrsos*. I shall return to this image in discussions below of Pentheus' meeting with Dionysos, the Second Messenger's report, and the ending of the play.

By introducing the *thyrsos* as a visible prop directly after the departure of Dionysos—first, possibly as part of the equipment of the Khoros in the more general setting of the Parodos, and then, by focusing attention on the *thyrsoi* of the old men—Euripides uses images to maintain a coherent thread through the multifarious aspects of the god already implied. The remembered image of the masked god of cult, the perceived smiling mask of the actor playing Dionysos, and the visible *thyrsoi* can combine to project the idea that the absolute power of the god is relatively benign. The retribution which the god of the Prologue has in store for Thebes has not been spelled out and may be as mild as Dionysos implies (τἀνθένδε θέμενος εὖ, μεταστήσω πόδα 49, "When I have established my rites successfully here, I shall depart"); the Asian Khoros frame their mission and their worship as disciplined, a pleasurable toil (πόνον ἡδὺν/κάματόν τ' εὐκάματον, 66–7); and the humour of the Kadmos-Teiresias scene conveys the impression that the power of the god is amenable even to a couple of old pragmatists. This smiling face of absolute power and its justification[124] can distract the spectator from the threat of retribution and violence which are also a part of the metaphors of the masked god and the *thyrsos*. The entertainment and humour of the Parodos and the Kadmos-Teiresias scene can relax the spectators and can induce in them the euphoria that comes from the god of wine or the god of illusion in the theatre. The masked god to this point can be principally a metaphor for worship, the *thyrsos* a metaphor for dance. The spectators can forget their troubles and the fact that in the world of Dionysos the vehicle of metaphor entails at least two paradoxical topics.

The entertainment value of the exotic and eccentric behaviour of the Dionysiac adherents visible in the play—the Asian Khoros and the old men (to say nothing of Dionysos himself)—may also be enhanced by its distance from the Dionysiac experience of the male citizenry of Athens who make up the bulk of the spectators. Teiresias may espouse the inclusiveness of Dionysos which accords with democratic principles

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[124] Dionysos is converting a resistant Thebes (39–40), Kadmos is protecting the family line (181–3), and Teiresias is prudently honouring (329) a potentially great power in Greece (273–4, 309).

(208–9),[125] and the Khoros may encourage a universal Bakkhic worship, but in reality Mainadic ritual appears to have been restricted to women while men celebrated Dionysos with the drinking of wine.[126] Only at the end of the play—when the phallic image of the 'Mainad' Pentheus atop his pine tree[127] (which maps back onto the phallic shape of the *thyrsos* and the masked god on the pole)[128] resonates with the imagery of the Athenians' own resistance myth in the carrying of *phalloi* in the procession of the Great Dionysia and in the ritual of *phallos*-riding—[129] do past and present come terrifyingly together.

Further, the non-threatening nature of the Asian Khoros and the old men downplays the propensity for violence associated with Dionysos and directs the focus rather onto the violence of Pentheus. He leaves the seat of the seer ἄνω κάτω (346–51) "upside down". His violence against Teiresias, however, is as impotent as his attacks on Dionysos in the next scene. Neither Teiresias nor Dionysos are perturbed on their own behalf but turn the repercussions of his violence back on Pentheus himself (358–9; 506). Playing on his name they predict the πένθος ("grief") that is to come to him and the house of Kadmos (367, 508).[130] Nevertheless, it is the aggressiveness of Pentheus which the Khoros seize upon as a foil to its eulogising of the god in the First Stasimon (370–433).

Their song both looks backward to the οὐχ ὁσίαν/ὕβριν (374–5) "unholy insolence" of Pentheus and forward to his meeting with Dionysos. The Khoros describe the inner qualities which are to be represented by the masks of the two protagonists. As Dodds points out, the Asian Khoros celebrate the god the Athenian spectators know; they localise him in the way Teiresias has before them (284–5),

125 Seaford (1996a) notes at lines 1248–9 that Dionysos' lack of sympathy for his mother's family signifies the god's affiliation with a *polis* ideology over loyalty to a ruling family.

126 See Henrichs (1984) 69–91. Cf. Gould (2001) 270. On the wine-drinking Bakkhai of the Lenaia vases, see Peirce (1998) 68–9.

127 See Csapo (1997) 279–87, Kalke (1985) 416–7.

128 Csapo (1997) 260.

129 Csapo (1997) 265–79.

130 The characters of Dionysos and Teiresias never appear in the same scenes so that it is possible they were played by the same actor. This actor may also report the death of Pentheus as Second Messenger, appropriately fulfilling the expectation he has created by the predictions of his other personae. For connections between the Stranger/Dionysos of E. *Ba.* and Teiresias of S. *OT* see Segal (1997) 355, 362.

and connect him to "the genial wine-god of the Attic festivals".[131] His part is described by a series of infinitives—θιασεύειν.../γελάσαι/...ἀποπαῦσαί τε μερίμνας (379–81) "to initiate his followers into the Bakkhic company...to laugh...to put an end to cares"—which are consistent with the appearance of the smiling mask and character he will present to Pentheus. This god promotes good sense (377), peace (419), and a measure of equality (421, 430). Pentheus on the other hand is aligned with the unbridled tongue (386), the lawless (387) and those who hold themselves above the common throng (398–9, 429).

The divisions which the Khoros draw between the characteristics of Pentheus and the god give maximum dramatic effect to the second entrance of Dionysos, now no god disguised as a man, but a man treated as an animal (434–6). The sympathies of the spectators are harnessed and guided by the embarrassment expressed by the Therapon who leads Dionysos (441–2).

The smiling mask: delight and delusion (Plate III.iii)

The smiling mask of the Stranger/Dionysos dominates this central section of the play (434–976). Initially the mask extends the positive connotations of the cult mask of worship, and the power of the god expressed through the *thyrsos* used in dance. Dionysos' return is aimed at delighting the spectators whose superior knowledge of the god behind the mask allows them to appreciate the double entendres of the stichomythia (461–508) which reflect so well the cultured cleverness of the god and the brutish opaqueness of Pentheus. The smiling mask through which Pentheus fails to see the god can also tend to fix the spectators' attention to the static, benign image and delude them into endorsing the absolute power of the god, forgetful of those dynamic mental images from myth, cult and vase painting of the god's ambiguity.[132] Being one with the god is being one with absolute power, an experience for the spectators which the poet creates only to undermine

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[131] Dodds (1960) 117 note at lines 370–433.

[132] Antonietti (1991) 213–6 would perhaps attribute this mechanical response to pictorial formulation of a problem (see above in Introduction, section III, *Image, word, and thinking*, Static and dynamic images). Vernant (1988b) 396, on the other hand, would probably attribute the mind-numbing effect of the mask to its capacity to take possession of the viewer.

through their unity, finally, with the unattractive, powerless, mortal Pentheus.

Thus the central section also deepens the ambiguity of the god and leads to the spectators' growing awareness of their own delusion. In this section the elements of worship introduced in the Prologue are developed and distorted to serve the god's plan of retribution. The palace miracle, after which Dionysos may resume his position at the centre, may return attention to the *thymele* as a place of fire, and to its associations with altar and priest. The First Messenger's report provides a vivid narrative of the activities of the Theban *thiasos*/ritual company mentioned in the Prologue, and the dressing scene enacts the preparation of the victim.

Just as the rituals of sacrifice are distorted in this central section, so are the expectations of drama as a forum for illusion. The palace miracle, the First Messenger speech, and the dressing of Pentheus are scenes in which the dramatic conventions of actor, dance, verbal report and costume draw the spectators behind the scenes to encounter the theatrical reality behind the illusion. As I argue below, there is a self-consciousness to the actor/spectator relationship in the palace scene, and to the mime of the palace destruction and its firing, which draws attention to their theatricality. The First Messenger's report appears to be stage-managed by Dionysos, and the dressing of Pentheus breaks the illusion of costume. The progression—from the allusiveness of the dance/mime, to the mental imagery of the report, to the visually perceived Pentheus—marks a movement from the abstract to the concrete, the general to the specific, the impersonal to the personal.[133]

With this progression the spectators both increasingly share in the god's power to turn ritual and drama upside-down and increasingly share, through pity and fear, in the fate of the man at the mercy of the god's power. The ambiguity of the spectators' position is brought to a visual climax by the opportunity in the dressing scene for superimposing the figures of Dionysos and Pentheus and the resonance of that superimposition of mask and flowing robe with the masked god of cult. If the spectators are not deluded by seeing double, as the literal-minded Pentheus is, then they can hold these same-shape images in

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[133] These are the sorts of conditions—concrete, specific, personal—which make for memorable images. See Paivio (1983a) 6 and above in Introduction, section III, *Image, word and memory*. Cf. Helstrup, Cornoldi and de Beni (1997) 189–97; and Pearson, de Beni and Cornoldi (2001) 8–9.

mind as reconstruals of each other and can use them for comparisons and anticipations in their own lives.[134] In other words, the visual doubling in the dressing scene can cue the mental superimposing of god and man in a relation which can draw the spectators into an experience of being both subject and object of absolute power. An analogue in the real world of such a relation is found in Xenophon's description of Athenians at the end of the Peloponnesian war: πείσεσθαι νομίζοντες οἷα ἐποίησαν (*Hell.* 2.2.3; cf. 2.2.10) "They expected that they would suffer the sort of things that they had done".

Following this central section there is a regression of images from the smiling mask back to the remembered mask of cult behind the voice of the god at the end of the play. In this symmetry the image of the *thyrsos* is superimposed by the mask of Pentheus atop Agave 's fennel stalk.[135] The symmetry of the same-shape imagery is a reflection of Pentheus' face to face encounter with the god which traces his initiation into the Dionysiac through the other-sidedness of the imagery, the delusion of the smiling mask, the violent *thyrsos*, and the cult god of retribution. This image symmetry is matched by the structural symmetry of the central section which begins with Dionysos led into the acting-area as the victim of Pentheus' hubris (434–5), and which ends with Pentheus led away by Dionysos as a victim to sacrifice (965, 974–5). It is in this process of defamiliarising the symbolic content of the images by reverting to their negative reference that there seems to be a shift in the spectators' sympathies away from Dionysos and onto the man like themselves, Pentheus. In the discussion below of the four scenes in this central section I shall trace the changing relation beween Pentheus and Dionysos as Pentheus comes under the spell of the mask; and the reciprocal relation of the spectators to Dionysos, as the mask and its message become increasingly suspect.

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[134] Something of the power of image metaphor may be explained by the exceptional contribution of shape and contour (above other properties) to the vividness of mental images (see Pearson, de Beni and Cornoldi [2001] 10, and above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, "Multiple meanings" in image shape).

[135] The symmetry envisaged here involves the reversal of Plates III.i. ii. and iii (cult god [C], *thyrsos* [Th], smiling mask [S]) and their positive connotations of worship, dance and delight into their mirror images with negative connotations of delusion, violence and retribution. In the mirror image, the *thyrsos* is transformed into the *thyrsos* head (Th/H) of Pentheus (Plate III.iv). This image symmetry can be represented schematically: +.ve {C, Th, S} ⇨—.ve {S, Th/H, C}

Face to face (451–508)

The construction of the scene between Dionysos and Pentheus emphasises a face to face encounter reminiscent of cult worship. Pentheus' scrutiny of his prisoner's appearance highlights Dionysos' bi-sexuality. His body is attractive to women (453–4) but his face/mask is effeminate. His masculinity rouses Pentheus' suspicions, but it is Dionysos' feminine face which absorbs Pentheus and directs the spectators' attention to the mask. Describing and observing the visible and literal is Pentheus' strong point, and he understands two ways of knowing: the phantasmal and the visual (469). In this he is following the conventional metaphor of 'knowing is seeing', which Lakoff reminds us instructs much of our knowing about the world,[136] and which in the case of dramatic masks is entirely conventional. As Marshall writes, "What masks did do…was provide visual cues about character clearly".[137] The ability to reconstrue the visual and to use imagery in reasoning in the way that Eteokles does in Aiskhylos' *Seven Against Thebes*,[138] or to grasp an insight into the reality behind the appearance, however, is painfully beyond Pentheus.[139]

For the spectators, who know that he is face to face with the god in precisely the way in which Dionysos describes one's encounter with the god (ὁρῶν ὁρῶντα, 470), the irony can bring delight.[140] They, on the other hand, occupy an ambiguous position between Dionysos and Pentheus. Although the irony of the staging and dialogue dramatises Pentheus' 'blindness', the spectators themselves perceive the reality of the god not through their own insights but through what has been made obvious to them in the Prologue. Without verbal clues the spectators too could fail to penetrate the message of the mask, face to face with it though they may be. And even with that insight, the spectators

[136] Lakoff (1993) 240 and above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Conventional and novel metaphor.

[137] Marshall (1999) 189. Contrast Wiles (2007) 225 who argues that "the primary function of the tragic mask is not to seal and fix a character type, but to transform a wearer, and to take power over an audience…"

[138] See above in ch. 1.

[139] Foley (1980) 108 writes, "Pentheus, the ruler of Thebes, is destroyed through his inability to understand truth in the symbolic form that Dionysiac religion and theatre offer to the adherent or spectator".

[140] Contrast Agave's failure to see Pentheus even though he is face to face with her in the form of the severed head which she is carrying. In her delusion she asks to see Pentheus: τίς αὐτὸν δεῦρ' ἂν ὄψιν εἰς ἐμὴν/καλέσειεν…; (1257–8) "Who will call him here to my sight…?".

too can become fixed by the gaze of the smiling mask and fail to exercise the 'reasoning through imagery' which the play's emphasis on the visual invites.[141] Pentheus desires the clarity (477) which the spectators imagine they have. But as Dionysos says, the god can be "whatever he likes" (478). For the spectators too, the mask will hold a surprise when Pentheus sees in the "bullified" form of the god (920–22; cf. 100, 1017) his real nature.[142]

At their first meeting when Pentheus assumes control and authority, the reshaping of Dionysos involves his hair (493), his *thyrsos* (495) and his freedom of movement (497).[143] Already this is a retreat from Pentheus' initial position toward the Stranger, whom he threatened to behead should he catch him (239–41). Beheading (or more precisely 'debodying' [1125–39]), ironically, becomes instead the fate of Pentheus. Now that he is actually in the presence of the Stranger, Pentheus is drawn to just those features which identify the Stranger's attachment to the god, and are antithetical to the personal, political and spiritual characteristics of Pentheus himself. In the play, long flowing hair is a personal mark of the devotee,[144] the *thyrsos*, the mark of the power of

[141] Foley (1980) 108–9. At note 4 Foley comments on the dominance in the play of "non-verbal means of apprehending the god" until "the stranger leaves the stage at 976" and then "there is a gradual movement to a renewed emphasis on effective verbal communication". Foley's note reminds us of Kaufmann's theory of the use of imagery in problem solving. Imagery, he proposes, is most useful in the "initial phase" of problem solving, after which the verbal system takes precedence (Kaufmann [1988] 235–6 and above in Introduction, section III, *Image, word and thinking*, Novelty and conflict). Once the poet has made the spectators familiar with the ambiguity of Dionysos' absolute power through the imagery associated with the Stranger's presence, the repercussions of their collusion in that power can be worked out verbally in the Stranger's absence. This is true to the play, although the final 'Dionysiac' image of the *thyrsos*-head of Pentheus, which occurs after line 976, is an image for the spectators to take home as a statement of the ambiguity of absolute power which must in the end be solved verbally, possibly in the Assembly.

[142] For the translation "bullified" (τεταύρωσαι, 922) see Gibbons (2001) ad loc. This scene has been prepared for by the events in the palace when Dionysos tells the spectators that Pentheus sees a bull and thinks that it is the Stranger. Pentheus' attempts to shackle the bull (618–9) rebound off his earlier attempts to bestialise Dionysos by imprisoning him in a dark place fit for animals (509–10). The bull in the stable is a delusion sent by Dionysos to humiliate Pentheus just as Athene deludes Aias into attacking the Akhaians' cattle instead of their leaders (S. *Ai.*). The delusion is reversed for Pentheus when he enters into the role of the initiand and sees the "bullified" form of the god. This is also the form of the god which leads him to his own death and dismemberment as though he too were an animal.

[143] Contrast Dionysos' 'adjustments' of Pentheus' hair (928–9), and *thyrsos* and movement (943–4) in the dressing scene.

[144] On the universal symbolism of 'hair' see Leach (1958) 147–64.

the god, and freedom signifies his spirit. As Pentheus tries to curb each of these characteristics Dionysos repeats the connection of each to the god (494, 496, 498). The mask of Pentheus is not described. Presumably it is the generic young man's mask of the tragic theatre with a short haired wig in the fashion of a Greek warrior. Nor, although he is the king of Thebes, is his sceptre mentioned, a symbol of temporal power reminiscent in image and metaphor of the *thyrsos*; rather, the character of Pentheus—so concerned with 'binding up'—is repeatedly juxtaposed with the god of "letting go".[145] This is the contrast which is caught by the masks themselves: the smiling mask of a life at ease and the tragic mask of mortal struggle. As a vehicle of delusion the mask of Dionysos to this point merely disguises.

The palace miracle (576–656)
(Priest and altar)

The antithesis between ease and struggle, which the masks of Dionysos and Pentheus represent, provides a visible cue to the scene which Dionysos is about to describe: the destruction of the palace. Although this violence emanates from himself, he acts the part of a messenger, detached from the events he is reporting (616–37). Ostensibly his report is to the Khoros but its extra appeal is to the superior knowledge of the spectators who know his disguise.[146] The god of "letting go" has released himself as he predicted (498)—effortlessly (ῥαιδίως ἄνευ πόνου, 614).[147] He sits as a spectator in silence and watches (621–2), and after the drama he comes away quietly with no care for Pentheus (636–7).[148] The Pentheus who is represented in the mind's eye of the spectators by the tragic mask, on the other hand, is consumed by ineffective effort: he is breathless, he sweats, he bites his lips (620–1), he leaps about deluded, shouts orders, and engages in a sword fight with a phantom (624–31). Dionysos appeals to the experience of the spectators both as participants

[145] On Dionysos' title "Lysios" see Segal (2001) 3–5.

[146] See in particular line 629. On this line and the 'stable scene' see also Foley (1985) 223–4.

[147] The *Homeric Hymn to Dionysos* presents a similar image of the still, smiling god from whom bonds fall away (7.13–15).

[148] For a discussion of the relation of the roles of messenger and spectator in the *Bakkhai*, and for the metatheatrical implications of the relation see Barrett (2001) 102–31. Barrett does not, however, consider Dionysos in this relation of messenger/spectator in the palace scene. Cf. Bierl (1991) 193–5 on the metatheatricality of the palace miracle.

in the illusion he describes and as detached observers like himself—an actor who has stepped outside the drama. Why should the spectators have any more care for Pentheus than Dionysos has? Pentheus after all is just another actor, though playing a part in a tragic mask.

If the spectators surrender to the smiling mask as a metaphor for the delight the god brings, then the Stranger's report of the toils of his mortal co-protagonist in the breezy rhythms of trochaic tetrameter can further distance the grim and humiliating events in the palace.[149] To be a spectator is in some ways to play the part of a god, sheltered from mortal reality, or to enjoy the escape of wine. But in Dionysos' easy movement in and out of the drama, his mixing of the roles of spectator and actor there can also be a suspicion that his capacity to delude may blur the line between illusion and reality for the spectators as well.

Behind the mask is a god who can shake the earth (585) and turn the house of Pentheus ἄνω κάτω (602) "upside down". The god has matched Pentheus' violence against the house of Teiresias (346–51). He has taken the restitution for hubris (ἄποιν' ὑβρισμάτων, 516) that the Stranger promised he would. The god's vengeance, however, can unsettle the earth itself and involve all mortals including the spectators. The very space of their illusion, the acting-area of the theatre, is vulnerable. The god at the mid-point can introduce imbalance, turning the things that are above below and the things that are below above. The spectators are invited to join with the Khoros' call to "see" (εἴδετε, 591; λεύσσεις...αὐγάζῃ, 596), even though Dionysos underlines the illusion of the shaking of the palace (ᾔσθεσθ', ὡς ἔοικε, Βακχίου/ διατινάξαντος, 605–6). Similarly, its firing and destruction appear as part of Pentheus' delusions (δοκῶν, 616, 624; cf. 631) designed to humiliate him.[150]

At the same time, what may not be illusory but visible to the spectators is the flaming *thymele*. If this is a hearth altar identified in the Prologue as the tomb of Semele and assimilated with the "smouldering ruins of her house" (7–8) then "the flame that was still alive" could be rekindled for this scene. Lines 594–9 seem almost an instruction on how to stage the fire at the palace, a touch of reality engaging the spectators in metatheatre, although the lines are not explicit as to how

[149] On the "tone" of Dionysos' report and its metre see Dodds (1960) 151–2 note on lines 604–41.

[150] On the interplay between illusion and reality in this scene, see Segal (1982) 218–23.

the firing might take place. To consider this question we need to return to the Parodos and review what the Khoros may carry into the acting-area. As mentioned above,[151] in addition to their drums (τύπανα, 59; cf. 156) the Khoros may also carry or wear other of the Dionysiac accoutrements of which they sing. These accoutrements include ivy (81, cf. 106), *thyrsoi* (80; cf. 110, 113), the fawn skin (111, 137–8), the flaming pine torch (146, cf. 307),[152] and the pipe (160). If, in particular, the flaming pine torch were part of the spectacle of the entering Khoros, then those who were carrying the torches would need to put them down before they themselves fell to the ground at lines 600–1. And it seems that Dionysos, from within the *skene*, gives the prompt to the torch-bearer(s): ἅπτε κεραύνιον αἴθοπα λαμπάδα,/σύμφλεγε σύμφλεγε δώματα Πενθέος (594–5) "Light the flaming torch of the thunderbolt, burn, burn to cinders the house of Pentheus". But it is not the house of Pentheus, identified with the *skene*, which they set alight but the tomb of Semele (597–9), which I have argued above may be assimilated with the *thymele* or hearth altar, and around which, as the house of Pentheus, the Khoros may have danced in the Parodos (60–1).

At 596–603 the Khoros direct the spectators to look towards the flaming tomb/*thymele*/palace (597–9; cf. 623–4), the Khoros prostrate themselves (a mime of the collapse of the house?) and, with an irony which plays to the spectators, the Khoros predict the coming of the god (ὁ γὰρ ἄναξ…ἔπεισι/…Διὸς γόνος, 602–3, "Our lord…comes…the child of Zeus")…and the Stranger appears. The actual destruction of the palace may be a delusion of Pentheus but metaphorically the palace is as ruined as Semele's house and the flaming *thymele* can symbolise this. It is a visual reminder of the futility of Pentheus' subsequent threat to contain the god behind the city walls (653–4), and it is also a reminder to the spectators of the god who mixes illusion and reality. His ambiguous power is not yet threatening to the spectators, whom he has made his allies, but in his power to immerse the spectators in his illusions or to reveal to them the theatrical reality behind the illusion, he allows them the dual role of man and god, to be a Pentheus or a Dionysos. The smiling mask can delight or delude, and to this point

[151] See above in this chapter, The *thyrsos*: dance and violence.

[152] Dionysos' fennel stalk is here used as a torch (145–7) rather than a *thyrsos*. In vase paintings both the torch and the *thyrsos* signify the Bakkhic; see Dodds (1960) note at 144–50. On the Lenaia vases, however, these symbols are often absent. For this point see Peirce (1998) 70.

in the play even its delusions can be humorous, and harmless to the extent that no blood is shed.

On the other hand, if the *thymele,* which may represent Semele's house and tomb in the Prologue, now assimilates the destruction of Pentheus' palace, it visually places Dionysos' retribution in the broader context of his arrival in Thebes to avenge his mother, and looks forward to the death of Pentheus in retribution for that of Semele. Although no mortal was responsible for Semele's death, it was the slander of her sisters which denied Dionysos his divine birthright in Thebes, and it is that slander which is being perpetuated by Pentheus. Around the *thymele* there is a symmetry of retribution: the humiliation of Semele by her sisters is answered by the humiliation of Pentheus by Dionysos; the focus on the vine wreathed *thymele*/tomb reinstates the power of Dionysos which Pentheus wrested from him when he seized his *thyrsos*; Dionysos may hold centre stage beside the *thymele*, as he did in the Prologue, in a position reminiscent of priest and altar where now the altar is rekindled in preparation for the sacrificial victim.

Foley writes of the "sacrificial metaphor" in Greek drama as a vehicle "to confront and explore divine and human violence", and in Euripides, to "make connections between tragic violence and [the spectators'] daily experiences of sacrifice".[153] If the scene is dramatised as I have proposed, then the "sacrificial metaphor" is visual, a cue to the verbal sacrificial metaphor which describes Pentheus' death at the hand of his "priestess" mother (1114–5). Given the familiarity of the pattern (and its development from the Prologue), the spectators could be expected to understand something of what the metaphor forebodes, although not the fine-tuning of its distortion as the god devises his 'fitting' retribution. Besides, the spectators' contemplation of the visual is interrupted and diverted by the aural—by the sound of the heavy tread of Pentheus within the palace (638). With his return to the acting-area the contast between the man with feet of clay and the ethereal god is caught by the repetition, πόδ'...πόδα of line 647, the first the literal tread of the noisy mortal the second the metaphoric tread of the quiet god.[154] Vision and sound combine to take the focus away from Dionysos, who nevertheless controls the First Messenger speech by his announcement of it and by his apparent knowledge of what it contains (657–8).[155]

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153 Foley (1985) 59.
154 On the repetition and antithesis see Dodds (1960) ad loc.
155 See de Jong (1991) 122–3.

First Messenger's report (660–774)
(Thiasos/ritual company)

Pentheus is about to receive his third lesson in the power of the god, in what is a rehearsal for his own *sparagmos* to be reported in the Second Messenger speech. The spectators, like Pentheus, are being given a preview. They too, it seems, are being told by the god to listen and learn (ἀκούσας…μάθε, 657). The prop that was visually highlighted in the Kadmos-Teiresias scene, and was possibly introduced in the Parodos—the *thyrsos*—is again central to the recalled action of the report (704, 706, 711, 724, 733, 762). This prop too is part of the rehearsal for the action reported in the Second Messenger speech and will reappear there in its own right as a weapon (1099) and in the related shape of the pine branches used to attack Pentheus (1098), and in the oak branches used to prise up his (same-shape) pine tree from its roots (1103–4).[156] Its final incarnation as the stake on which Pentheus' head is impaled (1141) is an image to which I shall return below. At this stage it is sufficient to point to the use of this prop in both messenger speeches as a "means for the dramatist to put his meaning into tangible, overt form",[157] and to keep the image of the *thyrsos* at the forefront of his spectators' minds.

Thus far Pentheus has proved resistant to the power of the god. The reasoned argument of Teiresias and the politically shrewd advice of Kadmos failed to persuade him. He was unmoved by the god who feigned acquiescence as the bound Stranger and the god who humiliated him. With the First Messenger's report he will hear from an independent witness of the 'miracles' performed though the power of Dionysos by the Theban Mainads. Each of these attempts to convince Pentheus of the power of the god is consistent with the approach Dionysos announced he would use on Pentheus and the Thebans in the Prologue: θεὸς γεγὼς ἐνδείξομαι (47) "I shall give proof that I am a god". This 'proving' (cf. E. *Alk.* 154) does not seem intended to create devotees such as the Asian Bakkhai, filled with Dionysiac ecstasy, but appears antithetical to this type of religious conversion and for that reason not intended to succeed. When the Stranger and Pentheus meet

[156] The Greek word κλάδος used here for branches of oak (1103) and the branch of fir on which Pentheus sits (1064) has been associated early in the play with Bakkhic worship. See 110, 308 (=*thyrsos*). Dodds (1960) at line 113 considers that the *thyrsos* originated from the *klados*, and to carry the *thyrsos*/*klados* was "to carry deity".

[157] De Jong (1991) 160, 163.

face to face the opportunity is supposed to exist for Pentheus to 'see' the god. What he does see, as does every player in the drama, is the smiling face of the Stranger. Pentheus does not help himself with his belligerence but then neither does the god 'lead' him in the Bakkhic way of which the Asian Khoros sing (115). The scene with the old men is similarly not intended to inspire the young Pentheus but to admonish and advise. The activities of his mother, her sisters and the women of Thebes on Mount Kithairon follow the pattern of confrontation. Pentheus hears of their magical and unorthodox behaviour but again not in the context of Dionysiac ecstasy but of madness. Vernant draws the distinction between "the possession-well-being of the faithful and the possession-punishment of those who are impious";[158] Dodds refers to the Bakkhic frenzy of the Theban women as "black maenadism".[159]

What, then, do the spectators understand from this story which the god has highlighted as a messenger speech which should be heeded? Do the spectators simply take delight in what is a popular dramatic convention,[160] and in this case its message of conversion to a god whom they themselves honour in cult and in their present festival, or may they recognise the counter message of the ambiguity of the Mainads' absolute power, or even a more general application in their own lives toward the end of the Peloponnesian war when the Athenian hegemony was no longer secure? The report is structured, it seems, to both attract and repel. It progresses from the pastoral innocence of the Mainads' slumber to their orderly preparations for the day: dressing, feeding the young, producing food. Ordinary procedures are mixed with the extraordinary. Live snakes are part of their animal costume, animal young relieve the engorged breasts of human mothers, *thyrsoi* produce water, wine and honey, and, like animals scraping the earth for food, the fingers of the Mainads draw milk from the ground (cf.143–4). So marvellous are these sights that the Messenger has the temerity to tell his master Pentheus that even he would find them an irresistible witness to the power of the god (712–3). The Messenger's direct address to Pentheus brings the attention of the spectators back

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[158] Vernant (1988b) 409.
[159] Dodds (1960) note at lines 654–5.
[160] On the popularity of the messenger speech see above in Introduction, section II, *Mental images*, Descriptive passages; and de Jong (1991) 118, Zeitlin (1994) 143, and Green (1996) 17–30 and (1999) 37–63.

from the imagined world he has created for them to the visible protagonists, from the mountain to the city. The Stranger has also remained (as he promised, 659) in the acting-space, listening to the teller of this tale whom he introduced (657–8). His presence adds irony to the Messenger's condition for the surrender of Pentheus to the worship of Dionysos: εἰ παρῆσθα, τὸν θεὸν/...εὐχαῖσιν ἄν μετῆλθες εἰσιδὼν τάδε (712–3) "If you had been present and seen these things you would have approached the god with prayers". Pentheus may not have been on the mountain to see these things but, as the spectators know, he has had the god right beside him.

The second half of the Messenger's description moves the spectacle deep into the latent violence of possession, a violence intimated in the Prologue (52) and the Parodos (138–9). When threatened by men who serve the interests of Pentheus, the Theban Mainads would have torn them apart (σπαραγμόν, 735)—as they later do to Pentheus—had the herdsmen not escaped. Instead, the women's madness is turned against the herd (737–9, 746), their dismembered parts flung hither and yon (ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω, 741; cf. 349, 602, 753). Next the Mainads attack two villages, again tearing apart and mixing up (753–4). They seize the children, they plunder, and, impervious to the spear, they use their *thyrsoi* as weapons to put the men to flight. The report divides between Mainadic harmony and Mainadic dissonance, between drops of honey (711) and drops of blood (742, 767), between victor and victim. Pentheus is drawn into the experience of a spectator by the unspoken protasis "if you had been present" (cf. 712) answered by "then you would have seen" (737, 740), by the appeal to his sight (747, 760) and by the Messenger's advice to him (769–70).

Of the images from Mount Kithairon in the mind's eye of the spectators, the central prop of the *thyrsos*—which has throughout the play symbolised the power of the god in his *thiasoi*, in the Theban (25), the Asian (80, 113, 240, 495, 554, 557) and the old men (176, 188, 251, 254, 308)—can also, in the absence in the Messenger's report of the visible *thiasos*, come to symbolise the Theban Mainads themselves and their extremes of nurture and violence. At the same time in the acting-area is the visible image of the smiling god who, in their own lives as the Messenger reminds them, brings the vine and its attendant delights (771–4). As the god of the Prologue, reminiscent of their cult god, it is he who has "stung" the Theban women to this madness, and it is he as the Stranger who has directed the spectators to note the

results. The spectators may not process this information on the spot but the two same-shape images, the mental image of the *thyrsos* and the visually perceived smiling mask, may be sufficient to intensify that forboding which was present at the close of that other set of imagined miracles, the palace scene. Just as the tomb/hearth altar of the palace scene recalls Semele's tomb from the Prologue, the Theban *thiasos*/ritual company of the First Messenger's speech develops its introduction in the Prologue. If this ritual company is symbolised by the *thyrsos*, then by the end of this scene the poet has encoded all but one of the elements of sacrifice.[161] All that remains to be provided is a victim.

Further, if the smiling mask/Dionysos/priest symbolism maps onto the *thyrsos*/Theban *thiasos*/ritual company symbolism, as the image mapping between mask and *thyrsos* invites, then the ambiguity of the power of the god deepens. The spectators may draw conceptual parallels between Dionysos and his destructive power manifested by the Theban *thiasos*, and between his priest role and its distortion by the black Mainadism of his ritual company.[162] Such parallels, however, are further complicated by the spectators' alliance with the god character and the superior knowledge he gives them of the theatricality of what they are watching, so that the delight of his absolute power may continue to mask its delusions.

Dressing Pentheus (912–76)
(Victim)

Just twenty lines after the end of the messenger speech, with Pentheus still resistant to the power of the god, the end to which the plot and the imagery has been driving is verbalised: "I would sacrifice to him [the god]" (θύοιμι' ἂν αὐτῷ, 794), Dionysos suggests to Pentheus. In an assertion of his secular power Pentheus echoes Dionysos (θύσω, 796, "I shall sacrifice") but proposes a "perverted sacrifice"[163] which will be realised not in the way he supposes (796–7) but will befall himself. Dionysos' next suggestion, to lead the *thiasos* back to the city (804), would reverse the Bakkhic movement to the mountain (115, 185, 194)

[161] That is, god (remembered cult mask), priest (smiling mask), altar (tomb/hearth), ritual company (*thyrsos*).
[162] For image and concept mappings see above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Conceptual metaphor and Image metaphor.
[163] See Seaford (1996a) note at line 796.

and would effectively establish Dionysos and his cult in Thebes permanently (ἀεί, 807). The play has reached a point of ultimatum. If Pentheus accepts Dionysos' terms Pentheus' life will be saved (806), but at the expense of his absolute rule over Thebes.[164] Of course Pentheus does not realise the implications of his rejection of the Stranger's offer, nor the fact that with the Stranger's fatal exclamation (ἆ, 810) those implications have already begun. Seaford notes that "'Ah!' is uttered outside the metre, and this gives it a special emphasis appropriate to its marking the turning point of the play".[165] The spectators, then, attentive to the sacrificial metaphor which was implied in the Prologue and which has been made increasingly explicit and economical through the props, may be attuned to the implications which Pentheus misses. Dionysos' exclamation may be a "turning point" for them. At the moment when Pentheus falls under Dionysos' spell, the illusion of the smiling mask may for some spectators begin to diffract. Thus, the extent to which the spectators can anticipate the tragic outcome will affect their response to the dressing scene. If they are deluded by the god, they can better appreciate the humour of the scene; on the other hand, if they have begun to see through the benign mask to a god of retribution behind it, then the laughable may appear "grotesque" and intensify the tragic horror of Pentheus' fate.[166] Either way the dressing scene brings a visual convergence between man and god which, as I suggested above, may act as an image metaphor for the ambiguity of absolute power as it was being lived by Athenians at the end of the war when they were both its subject and becoming increasingly its object.[167]

This emphasis on the visual is underlined by the fact that the dressing scene, which realises the feminising of Pentheus, is not necessary to the plot, even though the poet provides through his characters a number of reasons for its inclusion. Dionysos supplies two: one, to Pentheus, is that the disguise will protect him (823); the other, to the Khoros and the spectators, is that the disguise will humiliate Pentheus (854–6). It makes an appropriate and ironic retaliation for Pentheus'

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[164] Earlier in the play there seemed an opportunity for joint rule, a point Teiresias makes at 319–21, although cf. Seaford (1996a) ad loc.

[165] Seaford (1996a) note at 810.

[166] See Muecke (1982) 33.

[167] Athens was defeated at Notion (406 BC; see X. *Hell.* 1.5.1–17) and Aigospotomoi (406–405 BC; see X. *Hell.* 2.1.21–32), and her victory at Arginousai (406 BC; see X. *Hell.* 1.6.33–4) was overshadowed by the trial and execution of the generals accused of failing to rescue the crews of disabled ships (X. *Hell.* 1.7.1–34, D.S. *Bibl.* 13.101–3).

humiliation of Dionysos on account of his feminine/Mainad appearance (493–7). Neither of these reasons, however, is supported by the subsequent action of the play. Pentheus himself provides another reason, a rationalisation of the demeaning disguise in the light of military practice: preparatory to battle one should reconnoitre (838).[168] These verbal reasons, however, do not do justice to the novelty and cognitive conflict of the problem, expressed here through costume, of a man assuming the power of a god and simultaneously becoming the object of the god's power. When Dionysos summons Pentheus from the *skene*—σὲ τὸν πρόθυμον ὄνθ' ἃ μὴ χρεὼν ὁρᾶν/σπεύδοντά τ' ἀσπούδαστα (912–3) "you who are eager for what you ought not see and hasten after what ought not be pursued"—Pentheus instantiates in his Mainad costume this ambiguity: the hubris of his excessive ambition by appearing as the double of the god,[169] and equally, his utter submission to the god (cf. his appeal to the god to "arrange" him: σὺ κόσμει, 934) by appearing in the feminine costume which has been an anathema to him throughout the play and even most recently at lines 822, 828, and 836. Euripides' use of imagery to express this ambiguity seems consistent with Kaufmann's theory for the use of imagery in the initial phase of the solving of a novel problem.[170]

The spectators can be expected to assimilate this imagery at various levels. Firstly, the pairing of the young men recalls the earlier scene of the pairing of the old 'Mainads', Teiresias and Kadmos: an ironic reversal for Pentheus but not necessarily a threatening one. Secondly, as Seaford discusses, the transvestism of Pentheus is consistent with Dionysiac ritual and can reflect mystic initiation.[171] Seaford notes "the pattern feminisation-enlightenment-death" (found also in the case of Herakles [S. *Tr.* 1071, 1075]) which defines the initiand's experience as he/she makes the transition from one state to another and in the process "undergoes a kind of death".[172] Reference to Pentheus' robe as a funerary dress (857)[173] is consistent with the initiation pattern. The

[168] Odysseus in his demeaning disguise of a beggar, both in Troy and in Ithaka, provides a precedent.

[169] As Segal (1982) 29 notes, "Pentheus becomes not only a crypto-maenad, but also a crypto-Dionysos".

[170] See Kaufmann (1988) 235–6, and above in Introduction, section III, *Image, word and thinking*, Novelty and conflict.

[171] Seaford (1996a) note at lines 912–76. Cf. Dodds (1960) note at lines 854–5.

[172] Seaford (1996a) note at lines 912–76, and pp. 42–4.

[173] Cf. 833 and Seaford (1996a) notes at 857 and 833.

recognition of these patterns by the spectators, following Dionysos' predictions of Pentheus' death "at the hands of his mother" (847–61 at 858) and the Khoros' return at 882–96 to the sentiments of antistrophe α in the First Stasimon and the demise of the lawless man, can only intensify their expectation of Pentheus' tragedy.

Applied to the spectators' own lives, allusion to initiation ritual layered onto the evolving sacrificial metaphor of the play (with its implication of a human victim), as well as the festival pattern of *pompe, agon* and *komos* (which frame Pentheus' death), embed the distortions of this tragedy in familiar ritual. As Csapo writes: "The language and performance of tragedy evoke the pattern of the sacred act and pervert it…The use of ritual frames in tragedy is pervasive because corrupted ritual can create more tragic angst and fear than even the heinous mythic crimes beneath the metaphors".[174] As the smiling mask assumes both the roles of priest, and mystagogue,[175] and becomes a cue to ritual perversion, it would seem almost impossible for the spectators to see the laughable in this scene as anything but "grotesque". Yet the tension which Euripides has maintained throughout, through his ambivalent appeal to the sympathy of the spectators for the god who cannot suffer over the man like themselves who can, even at this stage can cause them to vacillate between man and god. This vacillation relates to a third level at which the spectators may assimilate the imagery of "two suns" (918).[176]

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174 Csapo (1997) 279.

175 See Seaford (1996a) note at 912–7.

176 For this interpretation of the appearance of Dionysos and Pentheus to the spectators, see Foley (1980) 130 n. 38. There is no indication in Euripides' play that the long robes both actors wear in Pentheus' dressing scene are saffron-coloured, but if they were, as Foley notes, "the audience as well as Pentheus would see 'two suns,' two brilliant yellow costumes moving side by side". In his extant plays Euripides does refer twice to saffron robes: the robe for Athene (*Hek.* 468), and Antigone's gown (*Ph.* 1491). Interestingly, reference to the colour of Antigone's gown comes in the context of her mourning for her mother and brothers as a *bakkhante*, her hair unveiled, her dress let loose: αἰδομένα φέρομαι βάκχα νεκύ-/ων, κράδεμνα δικοῦσα κόμας ἀπ' ἐ-/μᾶς, στολίδος κροκόεσσαν ἀνεῖσα τρυφάν (*Ph.* 1489–91) "I come as a bacchant, celebrating death. I have thrown the veil from my hair, my saffron robe hangs loose" (translation by Wyckoff [1959]). On the discarded κράδεμνα (veil) cf. *Il.* 22.468–70 and, in contrast, Pentheus' throwing off of the *mitra* (E. *Ba.* 1115–6). On the Mainadic behaviour of Antigone in Euripides' *Phoinissai*, and of Andromakhe in *Iliad* 6 and 22, see Seaford (1993) 115–25, (1994) 330–8, 350–2. Dingel's (1971) 351 and n. 73 interpetation of Dionysos in oriental dress also pairs with the costuming of the feminised Pentheus.

The chief visual distinction between the two characters appears to be their masks. They are as two sides of the same coin, or two cult masks on the same pillar. The focus on costume is a reminder to the spectators of the self-conscious theatricality of this play,[177] and of Dionysos' 'double take' on the action as both mortal and immortal. The god who has power over the drama and over their worship is present, but is superimposed on the man whose very likeness to the god marks his vulnerability. Wherever the sympathies of the spectators may have stood, the double image does not allow them to choose between man and god, because one image entails the other. Nor is it easy for the spectators to disengage from the action, for Euripides, like a mystagogue, seems to have led them also into the experience of initiation, of seeing double,[178] and with that experience sympathies which are caught up with, at one moment, the god of absolute power and, at the next, the man of none. Indeed their vacillation may mirror that of the initiand Pentheus.[179] If this is the case, then Pentheus may attract both their laughter and their pity in extremes of emotion which match the extremes of power represented by the "two suns" and of Athens herself in the last years of the war. The presence of both these emotions, indicative of ease and suffering, of power won and power lost, is consistent with the anxiety of transition.[180] In the ritual perversion of the foreseen tragic outcome, however, the nearest release from anxiety is Pentheus' delusion. If the spectators fear, as Aristotle tells us, that the same things can befall them (cf. *Po.* 1453a5–6), then the imagery of the dressing scene powerfully condenses the ambiguity of their own absolute power and the folly of deluding themselves with it.

Delusion—the negative prong of the message of the smiling mask—is given its independent image as Pentheus represents the Stranger to the spectators as a "bullified" god who leads him (920–2, cf. 1159): an ironic re-presentation of the bull he found in the stables where he had led the Stranger (618).[181] Similarly, delusion is given a bestial form in

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[177] See Foley (1985) 223–5.

[178] On seeing double see Seaford (1996a) at lines 918–9.

[179] See Seaford (1996a) at lines 813–5.

[180] On this anxiety in the rituals of marriage and death, see Seaford (1994) 279–80 and in Dionysiac initiation 283–93.

[181] Dodds (1960) note at lines 920–2 and Seaford (1987b) 78 interpret Pentheus' delusion as consisting of a double figure of the Stranger, one as he was before, the other wearing horns on his head. This doubling, along with Pentheus' vision of two suns and two Thebes, fits with the experience of the Dionysiac initiand whom Seaford suggests

the head of the "wild animal" Agave carries.[182] But the anomaly in the case of Pentheus' delusion—which the spectators can see is a delusion because Dionysos is still represented visibly in the acting-area by the Stranger with the smiling mask—is that the Khoros, after Pentheus and Dionysos have departed for Kithairon, call on Bakkhos as a beast with a smiling face/mask (1020–1).[183]

Not that this relationship of beast and mask is new for the spectators. They first met it in the play when the smiling Dionysos was introduced into the dramatic action as a captured prey at line 436. It is also a relationship which they know from their own cult worship.[184] With the Khoros' allusion to the dual nature of the god, however, suddenly the spectators may realise that what they took as Pentheus' delusion is in fact their own. The bestial form of the god which they could not see, in his 'delusion', Pentheus could see.[185] The god who costumed Pentheus as a double of himself, even to making him γέλωτα (854),[186] can also assimilate him with the beast form of the god, an appropriate sacrificial victim.[187] Thus the spectators are drawn from their privileged view of the drama through their alliance with the god and the delight symbolised by his smiling mask to a recognition that in their consent to its delusions their lot lies with the unlikeable human protagonist of the play.[188]

may have been confused into seeing double, as part of the mystic rite, by the use of a mirror. Cf. Seaford (1996a) note at lines 918–9, 920–2.

[182] This "animal head" is identified as that of a lion (λέοντος, 1142, 1215, 1278, cf. 1196, 1283), as a calf (μόσχος, 1185), and generally, as wild animal prey (1188, 1196, 1201, 1203–4, 1210 cf. 1108).

[183] This may be the way Pentheus saw the bull-face of the Stranger.

[184] See Foley (1980) 133 at n. 43.

[185] As Dobrov (2001) 79 writes of Pentheus' "hallucinations": "It is unsettling that this most extreme distortion marked by incoherent language is, in fact, the truest point to Pentheus' field of vision: the Stranger is indeed the Dionysiac beast leading him to his death!".

[186] Although γέλωτα here refers to Dionysos' intention of making Pentheus a mockery in an ironic reversal of Pentheus' ridicule of the god and his aged adherents (250, 272, 322, 1081), γέλωτα also recalls the smiling face of the Stranger/god himself (380, 439, 1021).

[187] Segal (1982) 29 writes, "The god's enemy becomes the god's bestial double, the god in his animal shape, to be torn apart by his worshipers in a rite where logical distinction and differentiation are left far behind". As the god of wine, Dionysos is also the victim poured in libation to the gods (see Csapo [1997] 258).

[188] Note that Pentheus, too, is free to submit to the "delights" which the god offers or to resist them (845–6). On his "willingness" and its appropriateness to the role of the sacrificial victim, see Seidensticker (1979) 183 and n. 15.

Their consent (like that of the sacrificial victim) and their foreknowledge are important to an understanding that it may not be the power of Dionysos—through cult, festival and drama—in the lives of Athenians that is being problematised here but power as it is exercised by Athens toward the end of the war. The god of cult whose mask-pillar image overshadows the play remains unchanged by the play. As a symbol of the ambiguities of absolute power, on the other hand, it is an image which is both "available" and "useful" for conveying the ambiguities of Athens' claim to absolute power in her imperialism.[189] The spectators' collusion with the god creates a dramatic experience of such power in a way that parallels Pentheus' belief that he can uproot a mountain (945–6). They know that he is deluded, but only discover how close their own experience is to his just prior to the Second Messenger's speech when the Khoros make explicit the connection between the stage prop—the smiling mask—and the beast-god it conceals. At this point the opportunity for vacillation ends. They are to be initiated less into the power of the god than into the limitations of their own power. Those limitations may relate to the competition for wealth and power, of which the Khoros sing (877–881=897–901,[190] 905–6), with its temporary, ambiguous and illusory rewards, as opposed to the permanent happiness of overcoming your troubles (ὕπερθε μόχθων, 904).

It is not surprising that this recognition of delusion coincides with the exit of Dionysos and his smiling mask at 976. Although the mask's capacity to possess the viewer[191] has recreated for the spectator an experience of delusion, the series of same-shape images also creates a coherent thread of images as a basis for recall and reasoning. This basis will only be fully realised with the final image in the series, when Pentheus, who has been led away as a sacrificial victim in the form of the god, returns as the mortal victim he is in reality. Against the "gradual movement" toward the verbal, which succeeds the visual emphasis associated with the god's presence up to 976,[192] this return to the visual, to the power of *opsis* and the understanding through image metaphor that "this thing is

[189] On these two categories of imagery effects, images that are "available" for conveying concrete information, and images that are "useful" in conveying abstract information, see Kaufmann (1988) 232 and above in Introduction, section III, *Image, word and thinking*, Novelty and conflict.

[190] See Seaford (1996a) note at 877–81 for the interpretation that dominating your enemies is not the finest thing.

[191] See above in this chapter, Prop and play; and Vernant (1988b) 396.

[192] Foley (1980) 109 n. 4.

that thing", reverses the delusory power of images, when mortals pretend to be gods, and reinstates images as a function of human reasoning.

The mask/head of Pentheus: suffering and sanity (Plate III.iv)

With the Second Messenger's report which begins the final section of the play the spectators are made pointedly aware of the "sacrificial metaphor". Seidensticker persuasively argues that "from the dressing-scene to the exodos each step in the dramatic action corresponds to an important step in the sacrificial ritual";[193] and Foley, Seaford, and Csapo fit sacrifice within the wider schema of the procession, contest and celebration of the festival, initiation rite, and *phallos*-riding.[194] The bizarre events on Kithairon mimic and pervert familiar ritual, but the ritual overlay also centres the Messenger's report in sacrifice and its victim Pentheus,[195] thereby drawing the spectators more deeply into a fate that could be metaphorically their own as victims of their own delusions of power.

When the Messenger delivers his report it is likely that he stands in the centre of the acting-area, at the strongest position.[196] If so, then the *thymele*/tomb may provide the visible focus for the "sacrificial metaphor" he narrates. To the spectators, who have been attuned by the play to its theatricality, the possible doubling of the Messenger actor by the Dionysos actor may resonate with those earlier priest and altar allusions discussed above. The voice of the god which rouses the Mainads to vengeance is accompanied by fire between heaven and earth (1082–3) reminiscent of the god at the midpoint, and also of the fire on Semele's tomb, the palace miracle and the fire of sacrifice. Seidensticker suggests that the pine tree onto which Pentheus would willingly climb "here serves as the altar (1058–62)".[197] A conflation of tree and fire is

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[193] Seidensticker (1979) 188. Cf. Burkert (1966) 106–108, and Seaford (1996a) note at lines 1096–1100.

[194] Although Csapo (1997) 282 n. 109 notes that "the sacrificial is…not the primary ritual frame for mounting Pentheus on the firtree". Cf. Segal (1997) 376–8 on overlapping meanings.

[195] In the First Messenger's report this 'centre' was foreshadowed by the *sparagmos* of the cattle and its detailed description (737–47), although the focus is less explicit in the earlier report.

[196] See discussion above in this chapter, The masked god of cult: worship and retribution, *Priest and altar*; and Wiles (1997) 70, and Rehm (2002) 41 and 309 n. 134.

[197] Seidensticker (1979) 184. Cf. Csapo (1997) 282 n. 109. Kalke (1985) 415 makes

suggested by Euripides' use of forms of the verb στηρίζω to describe both mental images within the space of ten lines (1073, 1083, cf. 972). As already mentioned the tree makes an image mapping with the *thyrsos*, and with the *phalloi* carried in Dionysiac procession. The power of the god realised in retribution is represented by the same-shape images of *phallos, thyrsos*, tree and fire in a sacrificial action begun by the priestess Agave (1114). The visible manifestation of this sacrifice in the theatre may be the *thymele*/hearth altar. This site, which I have argued doubles for Semele's tomb, is a most fitting point for the god's retribution, and also the point from which Pentheus can make his descent to Hades. In their response to the Second Messenger's speech, the Khoros (Fifth Stasimon 1153–64) exalt over the demise of Pentheus whose taking of female disguise and the well-*thyrsosed* narthex is a death warrant (νάρθηκά…πιστὸν Ἅιδα…εὔθυρσον, 1157–8).[198] The transformation of *thyrsoi* images into the fire of the god, sacrifice, and Pentheus' descent brings the events on Kithairon into the theatre itself, and highlights a vertical hierarchy between man and god disturbed by Dionysos' part in the play and appearance on the horizontal plane. This vertical hierarchy between heaven and earth will finally be visually and spatially reinstated when the Messenger returns as the god Dionysos speaking from the top of the *skene*.[199]

Before this, however, and as if to emphasise the perversion of the vertical hierarchy, Agave appears in the acting-area holding aloft her triumphant *thyrsos* garlanded (1169–70, cf. 1054–5)—as the Second Messenger has already warned the spectators (1141)—with the impaled head/mask of Pentheus. The other certainly visible *thyrsoi*, those of Kadmos and Teiresias, and Pentheus in the dressing scene, were apparently held low enough so that they could tap the ground (188, cf. 943–4). Agave's *thyrsos*, in contrast, is a parody of the cult mask on the pillar, and of the idea, proposed by Dodds, that "to carry [the *thyrsos*] was to carry deity".[200]

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the remarkable observation that "Euripides does not do the logical and plausible and have Pentheus simply climb up and sit in the tree. Rather, he creates the incredible picture of Dionysus pulling down the top of the tree, setting Pentheus on the tip, and gradually letting it rise. Dionysus thus 'crowns' the tree with Pentheus". Dionysos makes a *thyrsos*.

[198] Cf. Kalke (1985) 419.

[199] For the mechanics of divine epiphanies see Rehm (1992) 34. Cf. Mastronarde (1990) 247–94 at 273, 284.

[200] Dodds (1960) note at line 113.

When Agave, the priestess, arrives, the actor playing the Messenger/Dionysos/priest disappears. If Agave takes his position at the centre by the *thymele*/hearth altar/tomb, the perversion of the sacrificial metaphor is made visually explicit and condensed through the props and their symbolism. Agave's woman's mask with its hair let down (695), and her Mainadic accoutrements of fawn skin and ivy wreath are reminiscent of the feminised Dionysos in the Prologue. Her *thyrsos* is indeed an ivy weapon (25) and a symbol for her Theban *thiasos* and ritual company. Completing the sacrificial scene is the head of Pentheus, whom Kadmos explicitly identifies as the sacrificial victim (τὸ θῦμα, 1246).[201] The ritual which was implied from the Prologue and in which the spectators colluded is resolved in an image which may cast their thoughts back to its same-shape antithesis, the smiling mask. Agave's delusions of power as a hunter are a mirror image of the spectators' own delusions. If Agave has been deluded into not seeing in the beast she kills the face of her son, the spectators have been deluded into not seeing the beast in the smiling face of Dionysos.

The staked head of Pentheus must have made a shocking image for the fifth-century spectators,[202] and even more so because it is a reconstrual of the familiar emblems of their god—the *thyrsos*, the theatrical mask and the cult mask. In particular, the allusion and overlay of ritual emphasise the close relation of the religious and the tragic in this play;[203] this relation, in a play in which Dionysos himself is central, raises the question as to whether Euripides was challenging the centrality and power of the god in the lives of Athenians.[204] Important to this question are evaluations by the characters of who is responsible for the delusions which have entrapped the women of Thebes and the king,

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[201] Seidensticker (1979) 187.

[202] Ploutarkhos' reference at *Krassos* 33 to a tragic actor in the Parthian court who performed this moment (1169–71) from the *Bakkhai* as he held the head of the Roman general Krassos in 53 BC, gives impressive witness to the visual impact and memorability of the staked head of Pentheus. Cf. Segal (2001) 6, and Hall (1999) 114 who calls this bakkhic moment "a party piece in antiquity".

[203] On the relation between religion and tragedy in general, Burkert (1966) 102 writes, "The memory of sacrifice stands in the center of the Dionysiac performance".

[204] Segal (1986) 312 concludes that the ambiguities which surround Dionysos make it unlikely that Euripides could have been "optimistic about the city's capacity to incorporate into its ordered structures a force and a god that, by their very nature, call those structures into question". Part of the problem of Dionysos and other gods as Euripides presents them is that their anthropomorphism is expressed in "all too human" emotions so that their absolute power can be exerted irrationally and without due proportion (see Segal [1982] 298–309 at 303; cf. [1986] 308, [1993] 216, 222). Cf. *Ba.* 1348 and Winnington-Ingram (1948) 26–7.

and the effect of these evaluations on the spectators who have also in watching the play been subject to an experience of the god's delusions. Indeed, the 'safe' position of spectator itself has been shown, through the fate of Pentheus—who wanted only to see the Mainads and himself remain unseen (1050, 1075)—to be, in the world of Dionysos, also subject to reversal: the subject of the seeing may become its object, the spectator become the spectacle (1075, 1095, cf. 981–6).[205] If Dionysos is not held responsible, then this might suggest that the play is not about the god's absolute power per se. Rather, as I have suggested at various points throughout this discussion, the ambiguity of this god's power makes Dionysos a particularly effective vehicle through which Athenian spectators may be encouraged to examine their own ambiguous use of power and delusions about their power which were becoming obvious late in the war and around the time when the play was performed. They, like Pentheus, were to see their position—metaphorically at the top of the tree as subject of absolute power—turned upside down (ἄνω κάτω). They too were to fall "with innumerable groans" (μυρίοις οἰμώγμασιν, 1112; cf. οἰμωγὴ ... διῆκεν ... πενθοῦντες, X. *Hell.* 2.2.3).

Euripides places the verbal evaluations by the characters at the end of the play after they and the spectators have been exposed to the problem of the delusion of power noticeably through imagery. This is consistent with Kaufmann's theory about when to use the visual or verbal system. The visual system is most effective in the initial phase of problem solving in novel situations involving cognitive conflict. The verbal system, however, is superordinate and will take precedence once the problem has become more familiar.[206] For the characters who have been deluded, their evaluations mark their return to sanity. The Messengers' evaluations, on the other hand (and I include also the First Messenger's evaluation even though this is not at the end of the play), conclude their visually rich narration of the problem of the delusion of power as it is realised by the Mainads on Kithairon.[207]

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[205] On the implications of the spectator role, see Segal (1982) 225–6. Cf. Bierl (1991) 212. The other common metaphor for this reversal between subject and object in the play is the reversal of hunter and hunted. Of the imagery of the hunt, Roux (1972) at line 434 writes: "La métaphore n'est pas originale ... Mais elle prend dans la pièce une force nouvelle en raison des sa parfaite adaptation à la situation".

[206] Kaufmann (1988) 235–6 and above in Introduction, section III, *Image, word and thinking*, Novelty and conflict.

[207] For evaluation as an essential part of narrative see Labov and Waletsky (1967) 33–9.

What, then, do the characters say about Dionysos' responsibility for the terrible sufferings incurred in the play? The First Messenger concludes that the Theban Mainads' wounding of the villagers was done "not without one of the gods" (οὐκ ἄνευ θεῶν τινος, 764), and that whoever this god is he should be welcomed in the city (τὸν δαίμον' οὖν τόνδ', ὅστις ἔστ', ὦ δέσποτα,/δέχου πόλει τῇδ', 769–70). This is a brave evaluation and word of advice to his aggressively resistant king, and one that reflects the effect of the θαύματα "marvels" (cf. 667, 693, 716) he has witnessed. The Second Messenger, clearly sympathetic to the fate of the mortals, nevertheless evaluates the grisly scene he has reported in similar terms of honouring the gods (τὸ σωφρονεῖν δὲ καὶ σέβειν τὰ τῶν θεῶν/κάλλιστον, 1150–1, "to show self-control and to rever the rituals of the gods is best"). His generalised evaluation,[208] even though he clearly believes that it is Dionysos (φωνή τις, ὡς μὲν εἰκάσαι/Διόνυσος, 1078–9) who is responsible for the revenge taken by the Mainads (ἀλλὰ τιμωρεῖσθέ νιν, 1081), is consistent with the distinction he had earlier made to the Asian Mainads when they gloated over the news that Pentheus was dead (1032–3). At that point the Second Messenger accepted that the Asian Khoros rejoice in the power of Dionysos (συγγνωστὰ μέν σοι, 1039), but admonished (οὐ καλόν, 1040) them for exulting over human suffering. Neither of the Messengers, then, make the god responsible for the suffering, although they both admit that the power of the god is at work.

Nor does Pentheus hold the god responsible for his terrible fate. The Second Messenger interprets Pentheus' return to sanity firstly through a third person reference to Pentheus' understanding of his own end (κακοῦ γὰρ ἐγγὺς ὢν ἐμάνθανεν, 1113), and then through the direct speech of his appeal to his mother (1118–21).[209] De Jong considers the Messenger's use of direct speech here a technique "to increase the pathos of his story".[210] In addition to this function I would add another which de Jong identifies in a messenger's use of direct speech, but which she does not apply to the Pentheus example: direct speech may highlight "an indispensable part of the story, . . . essential to an understanding of the development of the action".[211] Pentheus' address to his mother is not merely an appeal for pity, but a recognition, transmitted to the

[208] De Jong (1991) 74–9, 191–2.

[209] On the dramatic function of direct speech in messenger reports see de Jong (1991) 131–9.

[210] De Jong (1991) 136.

[211] De Jong (1991) 136.

spectators, of his own culpability, and a desire to protect his mother from the grievous excesses of a similar delusion. With these words he becomes truly a tragic hero:[212] οἴκτιρε δ' ὦ μῆτέρ με, μηδὲ ταῖς ἐμαῖς / ἁμαρτίαισι παῖδα σὸν κατακτάνῃς (1120–1) "Pity me, mother, do not kill your child for my wrongdoing". It is clear to the spectators that not even he holds Dionysos responsible for the delusions of power which have led to his tragic fate.

Agave, on the other hand, appears to hold Dionysos directly responsible for what has befallen her (1296) and the house of Kadmos (1374–6):[213] Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς ὤλεσ', ἄρτι μανθάνω (1296) "Dionysos has destroyed us, I understand now". Her words do not seem an excuse for her own delusions, however, but simply a recognition of what she did not understand before. In each case where Agave identifies Dionysos behind her misfortunes Kadmos immediately corrects any note of grievance against the god into mortal culpability: ὕβριν γ' ὑβρισθείς· θεὸν γὰρ οὐχ ἡγεῖσθέ νιν (1297) "He suffered an outrage; you did not hold him a god"; καὶ γὰρ ἔπασχεν δεινὰ πρὸς ἡμῶν,/ἀγέραστον ἔχων ὄνομ' ἐν Θήβαις (1377–8) "He was treated terribly by us, his name without honour in Thebes". Agave's parting sentiment in the Exodos, that she hopes to have no reminder of the *thyrsos*, and that she would leave the part of the *bakkhante* to others (1386–7), steers away from holding the god responsible.

Finally, Kadmos' evaluation, in line with his moderating of Agave's evaluation, admits the justice of Dionysos' actions, although he also adds the criticism that the punishment is excessive (1249–50, 1346) and that the god is behaving improperly, as though he were mortal (1348).

If the characters who have witnessed and suffered Dionysos' power do not hold the god responsible for what has befallen them—as Pentheus says, ταῖς ἐμαῖς/ἁμαρτίαισι (1120–1) "for my wrongdoing"—then it seems unlikely that the spectators will interpret the play as an attack on their god of theatre and cult, although the evaluations do remind them of the dangers of religious extremes. In the Exodos, what is held specifically responsible is mortal hubris, a problem when it is exercised against a god (1297 x 2, 1347) and also a problem in mortal affairs as

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[212] See Seaford (1996a) note at line 1121, and citing of Arist. *Po.*1453a8. Cf. Roux (1972) at lines 1120–1.

[213] In the Diggle edition lines 1374–6 are corrupt.

Kadmos makes clear in his touching lament and memorial to Pentheus. "Seeing your head" (εἰσορῶν τὸ σὸν/κάρα, 1311–2), the old man says, recalling to the mind of the spectators that sorry head on the *thyrsos*, "no-one was willing to insult me" (οὐδεὶς ὑβρίζειν ἤθελ', 1311). The spectators too have been caught up in the hubris of indulging the delusion of power into which the god in the smiling mask drew them. In the head/mask of Pentheus they may contemplate themselves as victor turned to victim, the very weapon of their imagined power, the smiling mask, transformed into a mask which reminds them of their mortality and vulnerability.

The mask of Dionysos—which, as Vernant suggests, "makes one lose one's bearings in one's everyday, familiar life"—[214] is a useful vehicle through which Euripides may project delusion and disorientation in the real world. Two well-known examples from the historians Thoukydides and Xenophon of Athenians "losing their bearings" are the debates concerning the Sicilian expedition of 415 BC and the trial of the generals in 406 BC. As members of the Assembly some of the spectators may recall the anxieties of Nikias over a city deluded into mounting the expedition. Athens was on the wrong course, he believed, building large aspirations on a slight pretext (Th. 6.8.4). Athens was not safeguarding what it had, but putting all at risk for the sake of uncertain future advantage (Th. 6.9.3). Its young men were infatuated with what was not there (Th. 6.13.1). The tragic repercussion of Athens' delusion at that time was delayed until the destruction of the expedition two years later, and then registered in Athens with disbelief, anger, fear, grief and finally sanity (Th. 8.1). Nearer the time of the production of the *Bakkhai* the mood in Athens as a result of the war may be judged by the city's debate on its victorious generals from the battle of Arginousai and the vote for the execution of the six who were in Athens at the time (*Hell.* 1.7.1–35). Diodoros notes that "the people at that time were deranged" (ὁ δῆμος τότε παρεφρόνησε, D.S. *Bibl.* 13.102.5). Their return to sanity, according to Xenophon, follows soon afterwards and comes, as with Pentheus, with understanding and regret for their wrongdoing (*Hell.* 1.7.35). Euripides evocation of Dionysos through the vehicle of the smiling mask may resonate for the spectators with delusions they have seen before in Sicily, and with the climate in which they are living

[214] Vernant (1988b) 396.

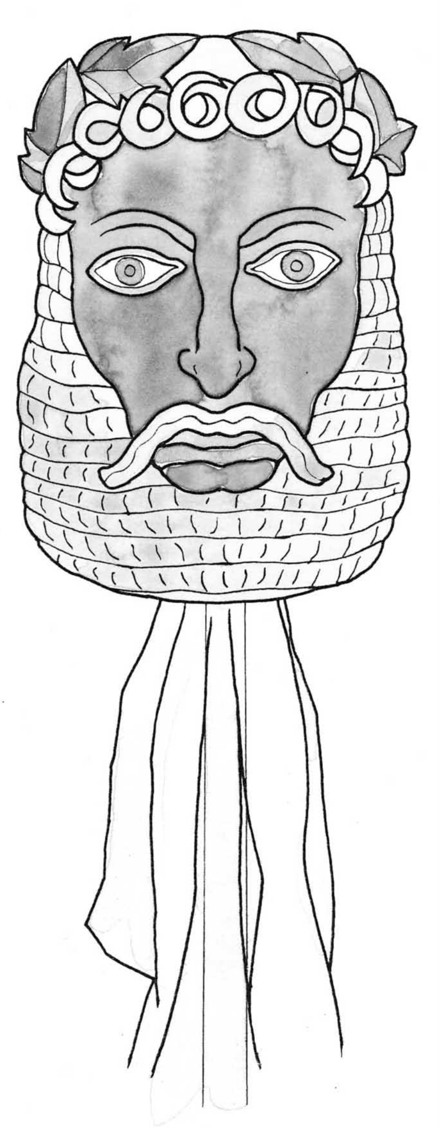
circa 406. Euripides superimposing of images, on the other hand, the image mapping of the smiling mask of Dionysos onto the cult mask, the *thyrsos* and the mask/head of Pentheus, can lead the spectators to harness its disorientation by a 'reasoning through images'.

Despite its disorientating effect the smiling mask has been anchored from the beginning to what the spectators have seen before in the masked god of cult. This provides a conventional image (ἐκεῖνο) which is a metaphor for worship and retribution. Even the tension between these abstract topics is familiar to Athenians who carry *phalloi* in the Dionysiac procession as reminders of the retribution Athens suffered through its resistance to the god. Euripides defamiliarises the cult mask by mapping onto it the smiling theatrical mask (τοῦτο) which has the effect, not inconsistent with the cult mask, of delighting and deluding the spectators. The ambiguity of the god's power in cult and theatre is translated through the further mappings of the *thyrsos* and the head/mask of Pentheus into the ambiguity of human power, its capacity to safeguard peace (dance) or to promote war (violence), to bring suffering or sanity. A comparison between the smiling mask of the god and the mask/head of Pentheus can suggest both the doubling of god and man and the paradoxical pairing of delight and suffering, delusion and sanity. Were it not for the spectators' own experience in the play of the subtle slide from one extreme to the other, their change of sympathy from the watcher/director of the action to the watched/sufferer of the action, they could understand the comparison simply as a conventional distinction between man and god, between ease and suffering. When Euripides created a character, however, who crossed the boundaries between mortal and immortal, male and female, humorous and serious, insider and outsider, prey and hunter, actor and spectator, he drew the spectators also into this ambiguous and reversible world.

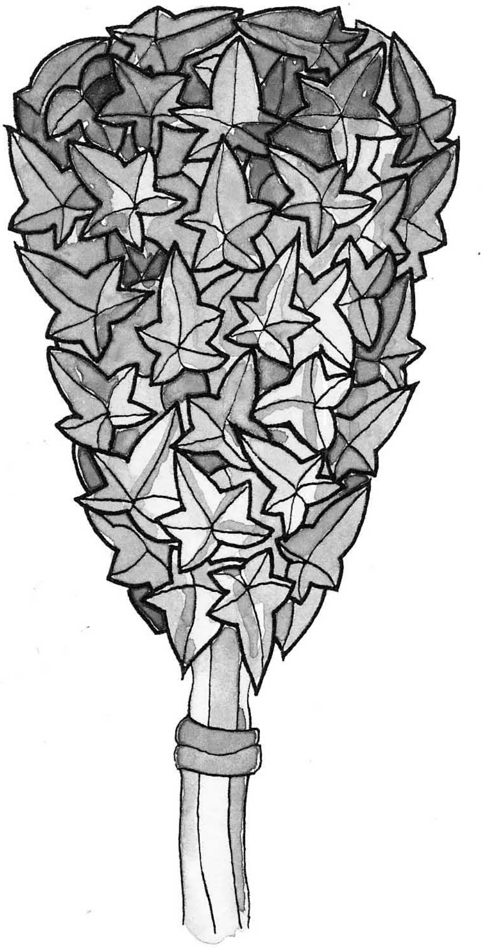
The two theatrical masks are memorable cues for the recall of these ambiguities, and, in their spatial and conceptual relation to each other, these images can blend "two mental packets of meaning".[215] The 'emergent meaning', I propose, which the spectator may take from the theatre is that the relation between victor and victim is inseparable and interchangeable. If the smiling mask defamiliarises the cult mask, then its reconstrual in the mask/head of Pentheus maps a further layer of

215 Turner (2002) 10, and see above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Blending. Cf. Richardson (1983) 212.

meaning onto Athenian Dionysos. By centring this play so self-consciously in the imagery by which the god is worshipped in Athenian religion, in the ritual sacrifice through which he is honoured, and in the enactment of his festival, Euripides can situate the Bakkhic frenzy which held all Thebes in its thrall (πᾶσά τ᾽ ἐξεβακχεύθη πόλις, 1295) within an Athenian context. One reflection of delusion and frenzy in Athens late in the war may be the hubris of its imperialism. When Athens returns to the enforced sanity of surrender in 405 its fears according to Xenophon stem from that hubris which informed its treatment of others (*Hell.* 2.2.10). If the images of the *Bakkhai* were to lead the citizens of Athens to a rethinking of the relation of victor and victim, then Aristophanes had real point in shortlisting Euripides for the role of saviour of the city in *Frogs*.

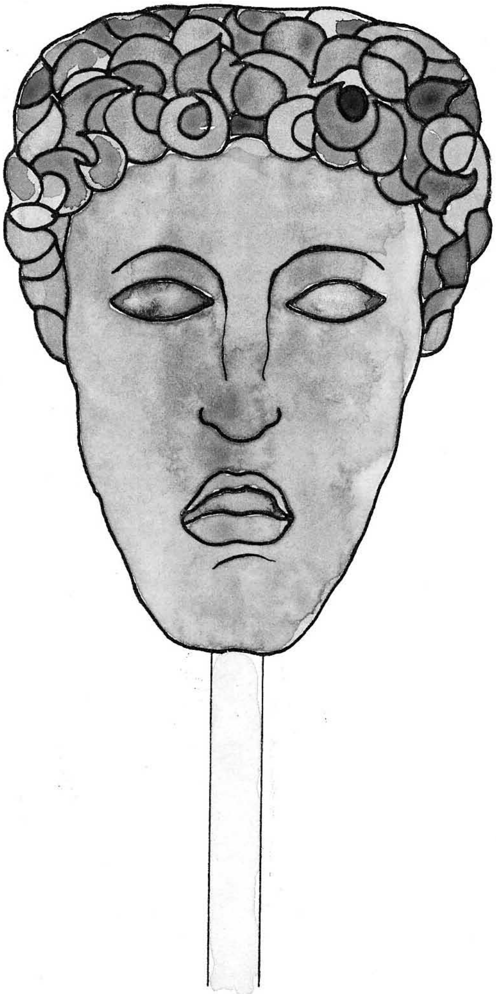


III.i Masked Dionysos of cult



III.ii The *thyrsos*
ἀνὰ θύρσον τε τινάσσων
κισσῷ τε στεφανωθεὶς
(E. *Ba*. 80–1)

III.iii Smiling mask
ἴθ᾽, ὦ Βάκχε…
προσώπῳ γελῶντι
(E. *Ba*. 1020–1)



III.iv *Thyrsos* crowned with the head/mask of Pentheus
κρᾶτα δ᾽ ἄθλιον,
ὅπερ λαβοῦσα τυγχάνει μήτηρ χεροῖν,
πήξασ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἄκρον θύρσον
(E. *Ba.* 1139–41)

CONCLUSION

In his chapter "'Value' in Greek Myth" Louis Gernet takes what is to us an abstract concept 'value', and shows its concrete realisations in the ancient Greek mind through *agalmata* in myth and legend.[1] 'Value' "is shot through with affective considerations, which are expressed in images", he writes; "and deep down we can see the guiding principles . . . the society's collective representations, which help to define it and which constitute the ineluctable framework for all its mental activity".[2] Among the symbols or precious objects he considers within myth and legend are the tripod (116–9), the necklace (119–23), the *peplos* (121–2), the shield (120), Agamemnon's tapestry (120–1), the ring (123–31), the horse's bit (131), the sceptre (137–8), and the golden fleece (131–40). These are some of the concrete vehicles which, in a range of contexts or stories, can convey a "conception of wealth".[3]

The *agalmata* of our study—the shield, the urn, and the smiling mask—convey a conception, more generally, of power to whoever possesses them. The power of the Argive shield devices is reconstrued by Eteokles to give power to the Thebans, the urn gives power to Orestes, the mask to Dionysos. Given the cultural charge of such objects and the spectators' own familiarity with a type of thinking which in myth, Gernet suggests, makes "images . . . its indispensable mode",[4] the spectators are, as it were, primed to understand the significance of the props at a concrete and an abstract level. Cognitively, as literal, visual, concrete signs with a non-literal, verbal, abstract reference, these objects realise the optimal correspondence for comprehending a metaphoric expression.[5] The kinds of precious objects which constitute the props under discussion would seem a very natural medium to the spectators in approaching meaning. The concurrence of these objects with symbols of power may also invite the sort of analogy with Athens'

1 Gernet (1981) 111–46.
2 Gernet (1981) 112.
3 Gernet (1981) 121.
4 Gernet (1981) 144.
5 Fig. 3 and discussion above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, Comprehension of metaphor.

hegemony during the fifth century BC which I have used in chapters one and three as a context onto which to map the plays themselves. Sophokles' *Elektra*, the third play discussed, expresses the exercise of power at a domestic or political level in the use of revenge.

Like the precious mythical objects discussed by Gernet, our 'precious' props are also objects which are in "current use".[6] As such they bridge the mythical world of the play and the spectators' own world. They are rooted in a familiar way of understanding the world through myth and its images, a way reflected in the embedding of myth in current religious practices.[7] This "traditional" view of the world, Buxton notes, coexisted with the "rational" view introduced by such thinkers as Thoukydides and Plato. The tragedians appear to have exploited their spectators' familiar way of processing information through the associations of imagery applicable in a variety of contexts, and also to have channelled that concrete thinking through the transformation and reconstrual of the images themselves. Although the tragedians' activation of this use of imagery may not be systematic in the extant corpus, where image reconstrual is part of the tragedians' strategies (as we have seen in the plays discussed above), it is done with system, effect and affect. Unlike Simonides' practice connecting image and memory, there was no theory in the fifth century BC, as far as I know, linking image and thought, so that the cases in which the tragedians manipulate their props in this way appear particularly innovative.

The common thread through the plays discussed, cued by props which make precious possessions, is the exercise of power. In the *Seven Against Thebes* the interplay of power between the shield devices and their counter images problematizes the issue of justice as it is realised in internecine strife between Eteokles and Polyneikes. An analogous expression of such justice may be found in the relation of Athens to her Greek allies between 479 BC and the battle at Eurymedon (c. 467 BC), when the external threat of the Persians was declining and Athens was establishing her hegemony. Power in the *Elektra* centres on the trick of the urn. The one who possesses it, knowing its contents to be a forgery, has power over those who value it for what it is supposed to hold. In this dramatisation the power of revenge emanates from what is an inversion of the honourable and the genuine. In the *Bakkhai* power is

6 Gernet (1981) 143.
7 Buxton (1981) xiii.

two-edged. This double perspective brings to the spectators the experience of victor and victim as they become alternately 'possessors' of the mask of Dionysos and the mask of Pentheus. Athens' surrender in the Peloponnesian war, occurring near the time of the production of the *Bakkhai*, cannot be overlooked as a context onto which to map dramatisations of the double-edge of power.

If these props—which, as precious objects, symbolise the power inherent in their possession—also invite a 'reasoning through imagery' and a reconceptualisation of an issue, the dramatists have activated this potential in different ways. Aiskhylos achieves a sense of fragmented justice by a decline in the potency and aptness of Eteokles' metaphors as he approaches the confrontation with his brother at the seventh gate. At the first gate Eteokles had struck upon the powerful combination of image and conceptual metaphor in the mapping of the moon in the night sky onto the eye in the dead man (Plates I.i.a and b). By the fifth gate he is struggling to make a correspondence; he has no match for Parthenopaios' sphinx and he vainly attempts to appropriate Thebes' and the Labdakid family's old enemy as an ally against the shield-bearer (Plates I.v.a and b). By the seventh gate there is no correspondence at all. Eteokles may call false the personified Justice who adorns the shield of Polyneikes, but his resort to the Fury signals his utter failure in winning justice to his side (Plates I.vii.a and b). The pairing of images in the shield scene in a metaphoric relation of vehicle and topic demonstrates Eteokles' thinking at its best, as he *produces* a creative solution to a novel problem, and at its worst, as he reverts to an old pattern (the curse) which *reproduces* an old solution of inevitable destruction.

Sophokles' manipulation of the urn image in the *Elektra* arrives at a reconceptualisation of a problem in a different way. The urn is mapped repeatedly onto itself and with each mapping the urn is reconstrued both literally and figuratively. The urn which begins as an urn symbolising death ends as a mask symbolising revenge (Plates II.i and iii). The repetition of the urn shape and the interiority it shares with the *skene* concentrates upon the urn image layer upon layer of meaning (Plate II.v). This concentration may work on the spectator rather differently from the *sequence* of pairs with declining correpondence which helps to convey the dissolution of justice in the shield scene. With the urn, the *simultaneous* processing, which is imagery's forte, may intensify the incongruence of the congruent images. Instead of conveying a defence of revenge, these images may draw the spectators into its darkness.

In the *Bakkhai* the smiling mask of Dionysos presents a further way in which images may invite reasoning. Euripides simplifies image transformations by centring them on the theatrical mask, and by ensuring their prolonged visibility in the play. The effort not expended on maintaining mental images is redirected into balancing the dualities represented by the smiling mask of Dionysos (Plate III.iii) and the *thyrsos* mask of Pentheus (Plate III.iv). The double images are themselves symbols for dualities in the exercise of power, and may convey the ambiguity of power registered in the reversibility of the roles of victor and victim.

In examining tragic props for the use of imagery in creative thinking, that is, in thinking about problems for which there are no set procedures, the main theory that I have used concerns the reconstrual of images, or the discovery in images of "multiple meanings".[8] The cognitive processes at work behind the use of images in reconceptualising a problem have involved the making of judgements (by means of comparisons), and the discovery of novel or emergent meanings (anticipation and hypothesis). Using mental imagery and verbal description Eteokles models the process of reconstrual of the shield devices for the spectators. In the *Elektra* or the *Bakkhai* where the spectators must directly grasp a reconstrual for themselves, as that between the urn and the beloved head (Plates II.i and ii) or the *thyrsos* and the head/mask of Pentheus (Plates III.ii and iv), this reconstrual is facilitated by verbal cues and by visually perceived props.[9]

The props in this study recall objects of value in war and death, in festival, theatre, religion and art. As such they belong among Gernet's symbols "which constitute the ineluctable framework for all [the society's] mental activity". Although the tragedians, in the fashion of Dionysos, turn the values of these objects upside down (ἄνω κάτω), their arrangement of the visual (ὁ τῆς ὄψεως κόσμος), mental and perceived, can lead the spectators to that learning and inferring (θεωροῦντας μανθάνειν καὶ συλλογίζεσθαι) which Aristotle attributes to the pleasure of *mimesis*. Whatever Aristotle precisely meant when

[8] Kaufmann and Helstrup (1993) 123 and above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, "Multiple meanings" in image shape.

[9] Kaufmann and Helstrup (1993) 143–4, refining the findings of Chambers and Reisberg (1985) 320–1, 323, draw attention to this distinction in the recognising of reconstruals. They are easier to recognise when the shapes are visually perceived than when they are mentally imaged. See above in Introduction, section III, *Metaphor: concrete and abstract*, "Multiple meanings" in image shape.

he saw in *mimesis* and metaphor the recognition that 'this is that', psychologists appear to agree with him to the extent that the starting place for 'reasoning through imagery' is in perceptual comparisons. Their understanding of the cognitive power of the image in thought and metaphor, however, extends its function beyond art and poetry to the everyday. It is in the everyday that metaphor provides the relationships of correspondence through which we make conventional meaning and understand our world, and through which we find new meaning and redefine our world.

By selecting some of the precious objects which contributed to the framework of their spectators' fifth-century BC world, and centring them in the situations of novelty and cognitive conflict which constitute tragic drama, the tragedians created ideal conditions for the use of imagery in problem solving. In the reconstruing of tragic props which are themselves objects of power, the tragedians have an economical, effective and affective tool for a reconceptualisation of power itself. The power which these objects can help to project and redefine may give new meaning to their value. These objects are not to be possessed as material acquisitions; rather, their power emanates from abstract qualities, the self-awareness and rational thought to which they can give rise. Concern for justice, for the darkness of revenge, for the destructive cycles of hubris and delusion, which attaches to the tragic props in this study, overturns traditional notions of power and value, and helps to validate the importance of images in thought.

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